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Query for February: Caring for One Another and Listening

How can we most effectively foster a loving and understanding attitude in our community? What helps me to listen deeply and with an open heart to others? When is it hardest for me to be ready to listen? How do we share in the diverse joys and transitions in each other's lives? In challenging or stressful times, how open am I to seeking support from the Meeting community?

February 2021 Calendar

**Our Meeting House remains closed for the foreseeable future due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but our Meeting continues its worship and other activities, relying principally on meeting via Zoom. Sunday Meeting for Worship is held at 11:00 a.m., with opportunities to socialize before and after Meeting; Mid-week worship on Wednesday; Bible Study on Thursdays. Unless otherwise indicated, all of the following events are virtual.**

3	Weds	9:30 a.m.	Right Sharing Online Workshop
	Weds	8:00 p.m.	Mid-Week Worship (check-in by e-mail)
4	Thurs	7:00 p.m.	Bible Study
6	Sat	10:00 a.m.	Baltimore Yearly Meeting Women's Retreat
7	Sun	9:00 a.m.	Meeting for Business
12	Fri	7:30 p.m.	Washington Friends Conf. on Religion & Psych.
13	Sat	1:30 p.m.	BFM Book Group
		8:30 p.m.	March Newsletter Deadline
14	Sun	12:30 p.m.	Spiritual Coffee House
		7:30 p.m.	Experiment with Light (via phone/e-mail, Zoom sharing)
16/18		8:00 p.m.	Beyond Quakerism 101: Light in the World
20	Sat	1:30 p.m.	Spiritual Formation Program Gathering
		3:00 p.m.	Nominating Committee
21	Sun	9:00 a.m.	Committee Day: Pastoral Care
		9:15 a.m.	Committee Day: Ministry & Worship, Stewardship
26	Fri	7:00 p.m.	BYM Young Friends Conference
28	Sun	9:00 a.m.	Peace & Social Justice Committee
		1:00 p.m.	Coordinating Gathering

**7:30 p.m. Experiment with Light (via phone/e-mail, Zoom sharing)**  
For details, see [www.bethesdafriends.org](http://www.bethesdafriends.org)

### **The Social Concerns Box**

The Social Concerns Box for February is for the Torture Abolition & Survivors Support Coalition (TASSC). TASSC was founded by and for torture survivors to end the practice of torture wherever it occurs (in some 150 countries) and to empower survivors, their families, and communities wherever they may be. Given the fact that people in US prisons are tortured (solitary confinement is classified as torture), it is all the more important that we support such efforts. For details, see [www.tassc.org](http://www.tassc.org)

To donate to the Social Concerns Box, please go to: [www.bethesdafriends.org](http://www.bethesdafriends.org) Clearly designate that your contribution is for the Social Concerns Box. If you prefer, you may send your check, made payable to Bethesda Friends Meeting, to Assistant Treasurer, Bethesda Friends Meeting, 3050 Military Road, NW, Apartment 834, Washington DC 20015.

In December, Bread for the City received \$720 via the Social Concerns Box.

### **Religious Education for Children**

Summer Camping Program. Enrollment for the BYM camping programs (at Catocin, Opequon, Shiloh, and Teen Adventure) began on January 15. The camps are residential for children ages 9 to 17. Anyone may apply on-line (please do!). Spaces are available first-come, first-served, so please register as soon as you can if you need a particular session. To register, go to: [www.bymcamps.org](http://www.bymcamps.org)

Why consider a sleep-away Quaker camp for your children (9 years and older)? For most children, at first, Quakerism and Meeting for Worship are seen as a “grownup” religion and experience. At camp, however, children experience the Inner Light in a natural setting, in outdoor silent worship, and in community with their peers and well-trained, talented counselors, many of whom were once campers themselves. Campers detach from electronics and social media to have fun playing and participating in camp activities; they gain the confidence that comes from learning practical life skills through daily camp chores; they make lasting friendships with children from other parts of the area or country. The Quaker camp setting and program afford opportunities for experiential, multi-sensory learning that weekly FDS and traditional school cannot provide. All Quaker camps are open to children whether they come to BFM or not, so please share this information with others who might be interested.

For details about the camps, visit [www.bymcamps.org](http://www.bymcamps.org) or contact Brian Massey (301- 774-7663). For an extended list of Quaker camps, see: <http://quakersdc.org/node/912>

Our Meeting would like to support our children going to camp to the extent of \$500 each, on a first come first served basis. When you apply, please contact the co-clerk of Pastoral Care, Parents may also offset tuition by volunteering at one of the camps during the summer.

### **Events**

**3rd/10th/17th/24th: Right Sharing of World Resources Power of Enough Workshop**

Are you seeking to simplify your life and take personal steps to create a right relationship with our world? If so, RSWR is offering an online workshop titled “The Power of Enough.” Participants, who will experience new perspectives through queries, storytelling, sharing, and singing, will leave with a deeper sense of self and connection to how our personal choices ripple forward to others.

The workshop will run on Wednesdays from February 3 to March 3, 2021. Each session is 90 minutes long and will begin at 9:30 a.m. If you are interested, please register as soon as possible:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSemy4K6cAHdK4vAYxONQI4bZieGQAn2ExIMLQ4ZxCV8BZLFug/viewform> Attendance is limited to 24 participants, and the workshop is pay as led. These workshops are funded by everyone’s contributions, and the cost to offer these five sessions is approximately \$150 per person. By donating this or any amount to RSWR, you can help support this and other ventures that further its mission. To donate:

<https://interland3.donorperfect.net/weblink/weblink.aspx?name=rswr&id=10>

#### **4th/11th/18th/25th: Bible Study**

Bible Study will meet on Thursdays in February at 7:00 p.m. on Zoom with the Great Courses series, Understanding the Old Testament. The lectures cover Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel and Apocalyptic Literature, and Psalms. Newcomers are welcome.

#### **6th: BYM Women’s Retreat**

The Baltimore Yearly Meeting Women’s Retreat will not be in person this year. Although this comes as no surprise, we will greatly miss our annual winter opportunity to gather in fellowship. Friends Meeting of Washington, which was lined up to plan the 2021 retreat, has graciously agreed to plan for 2022 with the hope that we will be able to meet in person by then. In lieu of a retreat in 2021, the Women’s Retreat Working Group will offer an online Meeting for Worship and time for connection on Saturday, February 6, from 10:00 a.m. to noon. The Zoom link will be sent out closer to the date. For further details: [womensretreat@bym-rsf.org](mailto:womensretreat@bym-rsf.org)

#### **7th: Meeting for Business**

On Sunday, February 7, at 9:00 a.m., Bethesda F(f)riends will consider various business items via Zoom. How the Spirit will lead us in discernment of issues both large and small is part of the mystery that is the Religious Society of Friends. There will be reports from Friends Committee on National Legislation, the American Friends Service Committee, the Recorder (re membership changes in the last year), a community report, and an ad hoc Committee to Nominate the Nominating Committee Report. All who come to Meeting for Worship are welcome and encouraged to participate in our worship.

#### **7th/14th/21st/28th: Meeting for Worship**

Bethesda Friends continue to worship together each Sunday via video conference using Zoom. Meeting for Worship begins at 11:00 a.m.

Friends joining worship via Zoom are invited to log on beginning at 10:45 a.m. for a chance to chat before settling into silence around 10:55 a.m. There will be another opportunity to chat with one another at the rise of Meeting for Worship. It is a real joy to have families with children and out-of-town Friends join us each week.

For Friends worshipping by Zoom, there will be an opportunity to share joys and sorrows with one another at the end of Meeting for Worship. Joys and sorrows can also be shared with a larger group via the BFM listserv.

### **12th to 14th: Washington Friends Conference on Religion & Psychology**

The Washington Friends Conference on Religion & Psychology invites us to a conference on White Privilege: Naming It and Its Complex and Confronting It to Build an Equitable Society. The conference will be virtual and feature as the plenary speaker, Sean Fitzpatrick, head of the Jungian Society of Houston. Jane Byerley, the co-clerk of WFCRP, has heard Sean and attests to his keen expertise in this area. There will be interest groups which will augment and support the plenary sessions.

White privilege and its companion terms were aimed at a system, a society-wide system which is stacked against Blacks, Hispanics, and Native Americans, anyone not a w.a.s.p. And stuck in the mire of it were its victims, a mire which slowly, steadily, inexorably diminished, controlled, and circumscribed them” (and all of us).

Please register via the website:

[www.fcrp-quaker.org](http://www.fcrp-quaker.org) The cost of the conference is \$40. To register for the conference, go to [fcrp-quaker.org](http://fcrp-quaker.org). Hit the WFCRP button and go through the dropdown menu. When you decide to register, visit the registration page (again on the WFCRP drop down menu) and follow directions. If you decide to pay via a credit card on the website, go back to the home page, hit contribute and pay \$40. The registrar will read that contribution as your payment.

### **13th: Quaker Book Group**

The Quaker Book Group meets monthly on second Saturdays, via Zoom from 1:30 to 3:00 p.m. We will meet on Saturday, February 13. We have not yet selected the book. Newcomers are always welcome, even if you have not read the book. We read a mix of books by Quakers, books about Quakerism, and books that speak to Quaker values and concerns. The group is invited to share announcements, summaries, and thoughts about the readings through an online mailing list.

### **14th/28th: Experiment with Light Sessions**

How do we quiet our brains enough to hear the still, small voice within us? How might we deepen our experience of meeting for worship? Experiment with Light is a meditative and centering practice based upon Rex Ambler’s book *Light to Live By*, which describes early Quaker meditative habits and translates them into a highly accessible process of clearness and understanding. Starting at 7:30 p.m., you can follow the prompts at home and write or draw responses you have experienced during those prompts. Here is the link to the prompts:

<https://experiment-with-light.org.uk/meditations/>. We usually use the meditation on the individual in modern language, full length, 37-minute version. Then around 8:30 p.m., if you would like to worship-share from your meditation experience and want to join in a Zoom gathering, please use the links below (remember to "unmute" your device). We anticipate that part of the gathering could go until 9:15 p.m.

### **16th/18th: Beyond Quakerism 101: How do we prepare Friends to be a Light in the World?**



- Planning for and Coping with Decline and Death: ([http://langleyhillquakers.org/death\\_decline.aspx](http://langleyhillquakers.org/death_decline.aspx))
  - Queries for Explorations on Living and Dying Well
  - Disposition of the Body: Donation, Cremation, Burial
- The Widowed Persons Group also offers resources and support to those who have lost spouses or partners.

For updates on COVID-19 news and how, where, and when you may get vaccinated, visit the Montgomery County or DC health department websites:

<https://montgomerycountymd.gov/covid19/vaccine/>  
<https://coronavirus.dc.gov/vaccine>

For general information on vaccines, go to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention or the Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

<https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/vaccines>

## **Peace & Social Justice**

Update on the Maryland Citizens' Health Initiative. At the September Meeting for Business, Friends approved adding our endorsement to the Health Equity Resource Communities Initiative to be brought before the Maryland Assembly. Senate Bill 172 will soon come before the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee. Friends are encouraged to contact Sen. Craig Zucker, District 14, and Sen. Nancy King, District 39, to support this legislation, if you live in their districts. The health inequities that unfortunately exist in Maryland mean that people can have difficulty accessing primary and specialty health care because of where they live. Senate Bill 172 creates Health Equity Resources Communities in Maryland to focus health resources in the neighborhoods where they are needed the most. These resources would be paid for by a one penny on the dollar increase on the alcohol beverage sales tax, imposed first on liquor stores, and two years later on bars and restaurants. For details, see: <https://healthcareforall.com/>.

## **Meeting Notes**

### **Baltimore Yearly Meeting Nominating Committee**

Be Part of the Conversation! Becoming an anti-racist faith community means opening up the work of Baltimore Yearly Meeting to include more different voices.

Perspective means a lot. The BYM Nominating Committee members would like to hear your views no matter who you are, but especially if you identify as a Person of Color.

Are you a camper or former camper? Someone who attends a local meeting, Annual Session or Interim Meeting? Someone who is curious about what our committees do? Maybe you are wondering where your gifts, interests, and skills might fit in. The committees appointed by Nominating Committee shape the work of the Yearly Meeting, and there is a space on one of them for you.

Should we talk? Replying to this message won't create an obligation for you to join a committee, but it will provide a way to share information and start a dialogue.

### **Peace Notes**

In the spirit of continuing BFM's postcard initiative, please consider calling on your legislators via letter, postcard, or email to repeal the 2001 and 2002 Authorizations for the Use of

Military Force. September 2021 will mark 20 years of war justified by the 2001 and 2002 AUMFs. These pieces of legislation have allowed three different administrations to authorize over 40 military actions in 19 countries without Congressional approval. This rampant war-making is an affront to the Quaker peace testimony and FCNL's vision for a world free of war and the threat of war. 2021 is the year to end endless wars once and for all. Information and a template can be found at this link: [https://fcnl.quorum.us/campaign/29832/?utm\\_campaign=contacts&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=ak&utm\\_term=15446.209196.YeeYgg](https://fcnl.quorum.us/campaign/29832/?utm_campaign=contacts&utm_medium=email&utm_source=ak&utm_term=15446.209196.YeeYgg)

## **Thinking About Race**

Published in 2020, *Intimations*, by Zadie Smith, contains reflections “on what has happened, and what should come next.”

“That prejudice is most dangerous not when it resides in individual hearts and minds but when it is preserved in systems. For example: an educational system that proves unable to see a boy as a child, seeing him only as a potential threat. That any child who enters such a prejudiced system will be in grave danger. Be he ever so beautiful and talented, inspired and inspirational, loving and love—he can still be broken.”

The last page of the book states: All the author's royalties will go to charity: The Equal Justice Initiative and The COVID-19 Emergency Relief Fund for New York.