

Reading Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

October 2017 Newsletter

“The pedagogy of the mystics slows us down enough to catch up with ourselves. How can we ponder the intimate immediacy of what matters most? How can we learn to not treat ourselves like someone we don't want to spend time with? How can we settle into a quiet, prayerful pondering about who we deep down really are and are called to be? And how can we be more faithful to it?”

- James Finley, author, reflecting on the writing of Teresa of Avila

October 2017 Calendar

- Saturday, 10/14** Tour of Maiden Creek Meeting House and Cemetery, 9am—4pm. Janet Lamborn will host and hopes Reading Friends will come to help. This is part of the BARN (Berks Agricultural Resource Network) 2017 Farm Tour.
Friends Fall Festival at Downingtown Meeting, 9am—4pm
- First Day, 10/15** Caln Quarter gathers at Sadsbury Meeting, Gap, PA, 9am—2pm. The program will focus on the Alternatives To Violence Project trip to Palestine and Israel. There will be Meeting for Worship at Reading.
3:30pm Vigil at Berks County Family Detention Center
- First Day, 10/22** Opening Exercises, 10am led by Judy Ballinger, Meeting for Worship, 10:15am
- Monday, 10/23** Friendly Readers meet at 6:30pm at the meetinghouse to discuss *Tribe* by Sebastian Yunker. Christ Field, contact. All are welcome.
- Tuesday, 10/17** Peace and Social Concerns Committee meets in the Penn Rm, 7pm. Blair Seitz, contact.
- Thursday, 10/26** Worship and Ministry Committee meets in the Penn Rm, 6:30pm. Jim Hiatt, contact
- First Day, 10/29** Extended Worship begins at 10am, no Opening Exercises. (Fifth Sunday of the month)

November 2017 Calendar

- Saturday, 11/4** PYM Continuing Sessions, 9:30am—4pm Arch Street Meeting House
- First Day, 11/5** Meeting for Worship followed by Potluck
- Monday, 11/6** Berks Peace Group meets at Reading Meetinghouse, 7pm. John Haskyns-Abrahall, contact.
- First Day, 11/12** Meeting for Worship followed by Meeting for Business
- Saturday, 11/18** Special event for Caln Quarter. Friends are invited to the Chester County Historical Society in West Chester for a tour of the exhibit, *The visionary World of Humphry Marshall, 1750-18006* (See Page 3 for more)

Key Links

- Caln Quarterly Meeting
www.quakercloud.org/cloud/caln-quarterly-meeting
- Philadelphia Yearly Meeting
www.pym.org
- Friends General Conference
www.fgcquaker.org
- Friends Committee on National Legislation
<http://fcnl.org>

Reading Monthly Meeting, 108 North Sixth Street, Reading, PA - www.readingfriendsmeeting.org



Notes of the October Monthly Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business—Sunday, October 8, 2017

Janet Lamborn, clerk Bonnie Knutsen, recording clerk

Present: Judy Ballinger and Blair Seitz, Heather Ehrlich, Chris Field, Peter Frank, Debbie and Charlie Gilbert, Jim Hiatt, Carl Knutsen, Betty and Taylor Lamborn, Roger Lawn, Nan and Jim Morrissey, Jean Pedersen, Cys Sica

Janet Lamborn opened the meeting by reading an Email from Marie Ryan. Marie thanked the Meeting for its love and support as she stay close to home caring for her husband, Mark, who is ill with cancer. Friends listened with closest attention, reflecting their love and concern for Marie and Mark.

Approval of the Minutes of September 10, 2017

No treasurer's report this month.

Request for Financial Assistance

Charlie Gilbert reported that a member of our meeting is in need of financial assistance. He recommended that we provide a check for \$500, available in our budget at line 5220. The Meeting approved. Taking this action allows our Meeting (if the Friend in need agrees) to approach PYM for assistance from their members' assistance fund. A minute will be prepared to clarify the matter.

Opportunity House Project

Since Cynthia Felter and Beth Finlay, leaders of this project for many years, are retiring, the Meeting must decide whether or not to continue supporting it. Beth Finlay tell us that the \$1,200 we currently provide yearly is not enough to buy and prepare a well-balanced meal.

The Meeting recognizes that it is not able to provide the manpower to shop and prepare the meals. Exeter Meeting may decide to assume this responsibility. Friends agreed that we are happy to continue providing \$1,200 a year to buy groceries if Exeter wants to take the lead in preparing the meals. We believe it is important that Exeter show ownership of this project by adding some of their own money. Until we understand what Exeter would like to do, we cannot make any definite decisions. Janet Lamborn will be our lead negotiator in working out an understanding with our neighbor meeting.

Hockessin Meeting Seeks Assistance

Jim Morrissey reports that Hockessin Meeting, an old meeting in the northern reaches of Delaware, seeks financial assistance from other meetings to improve its colonial-era meetinghouse. The Meeting asked the Gifts and Loans Committee to consider this request.

A Clerk With Two Hats

As clerk of our meeting, Janet Lamborn asked us to evaluate the work of the Caln Quarter Care Committee (CQCC) and her work as our representative to the Committee.

Goals of the CQCC are: 1) to facilitate communication among member meetings, 2) support the work of the officers of Caln Monthly Meetings, 3) initiate and facilitate youth activities, 4) participate in the planning and support of the annual session at Swatara and the summer program at Old Caln, 5) assist the nominating committee in finding volunteers to fill committee posts, and 6) encourage visitation among the Meetings.

Reading Meeting feels that CQCC is doing well in sharing information and supporting Swatara and Old Caln events. Planning youth activities doesn't seem to fit this committee. It would be helpful if the larger meetings could announce youth activities far enough in advance to allow for youth from the smaller meetings to take part.

Janet reported that Jim Kerr is now the clerk and Connie Webster the recording clerk of the Caln Quarter.

Study Group on Hold

Jim Hiatt, clerk of Worship and Ministry Committee, reported that the 9am Sunday Study Group no longer meets because no one comes. After some discussion, the Meeting decided to lay aside this program for now as it does not appear to be meaningful to our present group.

Meeting Sets Christmas Schedule

Saturday, 12/16— decorate the Meetinghouse with greens

Sunday, 12/17—Christmas program and Tea

Christmas Eve, 12/24—Usual Morning Worship schedule.

The Morrisseys will open the meetinghouse at 7pm for worship and the Lamborns will close at 9pm.

Sunday, 12/31—removing of the Greens

Announcements

- Maiden Creek Meetinghouse tour, part of BARN 2017 barn tour, 9am—4pm

- Vigil at Berks County Family Detention Center, 3:30pm

- Bonnie Knutsen

Caln Quarter Friends are Invited

Friends of Caln Quarter are invited to tour the exhibit "Adrian Martinez Presents the Visionary World Of Humphy Marshall, 1750-1800" on Saturday, November 18 at 10am at the Chester County Historical Society.

Our tour leader will be Martinez himself, the internationally-known artist who created 12 original paintings exploring the life of Humphy Marshall*, a Quaker and a botanist, astronomer, stone mason and farmer. Through his life we will see the evolution of Chester County from frontier to farmland in the late 18th century. Quaker life and beliefs are a core theme of the exhibition.

Adrian Martinez lives with his wife, Leah, and their son, Sebastian in Downingtown, Pennsylvania. He is a member of Downingtown Friends Meeting and is on the Board of Trustees for Old Caln Meetinghouse.

Note: There may be a ticket fee for the gallery

*Humphy Marshall is the 6th great uncle of Pat Jackson. Moses Marshall who is also depicted in this exhibit, is Pat's 5th great grandfather.

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How to Support Detention Center Families

Anne Bodnyk, treasurer, received a request for information on how to donate funds to support the needs of detention center families. Carol Anne Donohoe, attorney and RMM member, sent the following reply.

"That is wonderful. The greatest need right now is for legal support. There are many families coming in and out right now and we are doing our best to make sure that all are represented, pro bono. To that end we started a nonprofit called ALDEA - The People's Justice Center.

If s/he donates to ALDEA, we currently have a matching donor so their donation will go twice as far. So far this year we have successfully gotten the release of 212 families, all pro bono. We could really use the support as for the past 3-1/2 years we have financed our work from our own income.

Here is a link to our website, <http://aldeapjc.org/>

There's more information about what we do on our Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/AldeaPJC/>

There are links to donate at each of those sites. Otherwise, if they wish to mail a check they can write it out to ALDEA - The People's Justice Center and send to: 532 Walnut St, Reading PA 19601."

- from Carol Anne Donohoe

Lancaster Meeting Offers AVP Workshop

Joe Moore of Lancaster Meeting announces that an Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) basic workshop is being offered to the community Saturday and Sunday, November 11 and 12 at the Lancaster Friends Meeting House, 110 Tulane Terrace, Lancaster PA 17603. Workshop schedule is 9am - 4pm each day with an hour for breaks and lunch.

Briefly, AVP workshops follow the experiential learning model. We use the shared experience of the participants through interactive exercises in pairs, small groups and large group discussions. One of the principles of AVP is that "we are all teachers and learners." Some participants may be accustomed to teachers who stand up in front of the class and lecture. We instruct only to give directions for or explain the intent of an exercise. This experiential style takes some participants a little time to adjust to, but once they begin to feel empowered, we hear a lot of positive feedback about our approach.

We use a variety of interactive exercises, time for self-reflection, role plays, and group discussions. We include some fun games that we call "Light and Lively" exercises to lighten the mood periodically. The central philosophy of AVP is a concept we refer to as Transforming Power. While it can be hard to describe I think of it as a transcendent power we each have within us to access our "best, nonviolent selves" when faced with a potential conflict. We do many exercises on this subject during the workshop.

While the program is available to anyone interested, whatever the capacity to pay, we have a suggested donation of \$35 total for the two days (you can pay at the door). Such details can be arranged once we have a final list of participants.

Please reply to me by October 13th and let me know if you plan to attend. I am also happy to answer any of your questions.

Joe Moore, Lancaster Meeting
josephmoore26@aol.com

Exeter Meeting will hold a Work Day on Saturday, November 4, at the Meetinghouse, starting at 9am. Bring outdoors tools. It is hoped that most of the leaves will be down by then.

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A Warm Reminder

If you plan to use the meetinghouse in the coming months, be sure to schedule it on the calendar in the conference room so that the **heat** can be set.

- Jim Lamborn, clerk, House Committee

How will You Serve in 2018?

The Nominating Committee (Bonnie Knutsen, Heather Ehrlich and Cys Sica) will be contacting you to review your committee assignments for 2018. FYI: The committee list is posted at our website.

Hold in the Light Marie Ryan and her husband, Mark Gunlefinger. Mark is at home under hospice care.

Hold in the Light the Stillwell family as they make plans to honor the life of their mother, B.J. Stillwell, who died October 5 in Lancaster, PA. A memorial service on Thanksgiving weekend is possible.

Happy Birthday to Lola Ronning (11/4).

An Opportunity to Lead

Please contact Jim Hiatt when Thee feels led to lead Opening Exercises this fall/winter. David Dare is available to accompany hymns for Opening Exercises.

Support our Meeting

Mail your contribution to:
Reading Monthly Meeting, c/o Ann Bodnyk,
PO Box 148, Kutztown, PA 19530-0148

Benjamin Who?

Friends know and revere the name of John Woolman, an 18th-century leader in the abolition movement. But who among us are aware of Benjamin Lay, an even earlier Quaker voice opposing slavery?

Lay has found his sympathetic biographer in Marcus Redicker who has just published *The Fearless Benjamin Lay: the Quaker Dwarf Who Became the First Revolutionary Abolitionist*.

In an article for the Smithsonian, September 2017, Redicker writes: "For nearly a quarter-century he railed against slavery in one Quaker meeting after another in and around Philadelphia." It was a time when Quaker leaders, also leaders in government, were prospering in the new country. Most owned slaves.

When Lay wrote his treatise, *All Slave-Keepers That Keep the Innocent in Bondage, Apostates*, he had to rely on his friend, Benjamin Franklin to get it published. It became a founding text of Atlantic antislavery, but the Overseers of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting condemned it and declared the author "not of their religious community." In 1738 Lay became the last of a very few Quakers disowned for protests against slavery.

Lay then moved to the country near Abington, built himself a cave and lived simply in "plain" style. He boycotted all commodities produced by slave labor, grew his own food, eating only fruits and vegetables, grew flax and made his own clothes. When he died at the age of 77, he was buried in an unmarked grave in the Quaker burial ground in Abington. He was a remarkable man, centuries ahead of his time.

- Bonnie Knutsen



Please join us for worship every Sunday. Opening Exercises begin at 10am followed by worship at 10:15am. We are an unprogrammed meeting, and a member of Caln Quarter and Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. For more information, call 610-372-5345, visit us on Face Book or at our web site, www.readingfriendsmeeting.org.

The Reading Monthly Meeting Newsletter is published at our website and in print 10 times a year by the Communications Committee. Send news for the November newsletter to Bonnie Knutsen, bknutsen@ptd.net by First Day, November 12. Submit address, telephone or Email changes to Carl Knutsen at webagent@readingfriendsmeeting.org.

Clerk of Reading Meeting: Janet Lamborn
Treasurer: Ann Bodnyk
Clerk of Trustees: Taylor Lamborn

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