

Reading Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

November/December 2017 Newsletter

"Do not be daunted by the enormity of the world's grief. Do justly, now. Love mercy, now. Walk humbly, now. You are not obligated to complete the work, but neither are you free to abandon it."

- Source uncertain. May come from the Talmud according to Jody Kinney of Downingtown Meeting, who first heard it quoted by Thomas Jeavons, a past PYM General Secretary

November 2017 Calendar

- Saturday, 11/18** 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*, at 10am. Artist Adrian Martinez, tour leader
- First Day, 11/19** Opening Exercises at 10am led by Blair Seitz. Meeting for Worship at 10:15am. The Swatara Planning Committee meets in the Penn Room at 1pm. A Vigil at the Berks County Family Detention Center will begin at 3:30pm
- Tuesday, 11/21** Peace and Social Concerns Committee 7pm in the Penn Room. Blair Seitz, contact
- Wednesday, 11/22** Interfaith Thanksgiving Service at the Church of The Brethren, Wyomissing, 7pm.
- Saturday, 11/25** Memorial Service for B.J. Stillwell at 12 noon followed by fellowship. Charlie Gilbert, contact
- First Day, 11/26** Opening Exercises at 10am led by Jeanne Elberfeld, followed by Meeting for Worship at 10:15am

Key Links

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

December 2017 Calendar

- First Day, 12/3** 10am Opening Exercises and Meeting for Worship followed by Potluck
- Monday, 12/4** Berks Peace Group meets at Reading Meetinghouse, 7pm. John Haskyns-Abrahall, contact.
- Saturday, 12/9** Memorial Service for Mark Gunlefinger, husband of Marie Ryan, 2pm in the Meetinghouse. A time for fellowship will follow. Charlie Gilbert, contact
- First Day, 12/10** Meeting for Worship followed by Meeting for Business
- Saturday, 12/16** Decorating the Meetinghouse, 2pm. Pizza will be served.
- First Day, 12/17** Christmas Program at 9am followed by Meeting for Worship and the Christmas Tea
- First Day, 12/24** Christmas Eve. Meeting for Worship at 10am. The Meetinghouse will be open for worship from 7—9pm.
- First Day, 12/31** Meeting for Worship and the removing of the Greens.

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



Notes of the November Monthly Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business - Sunday, November 12, 2017

Janet Lamborn, clerk Jim Lamborn, recording clerk

Present: Judy and Phil Bohne, Heather Ehrlich and John Rivera, Jeanne Elberfeld, Chris Field, Peter Frank, Charlie Gilbert, Jennifer Hanf and John Loomis, Bonnie Knutsen, Betty and Taylor Lamborn, Nan and Jim Morrissey, Blair Seitz, Cys Sica

Minutes of September and October Meeting for Business approved. Treasurer's Report for September and October accepted.

Nominating Committee Report

Bonnie Knutsen, clerk, presented a preliminary report of committee memberships for 2018, based on the findings of the committee after contacting each member or attendee individually.

Concerns raised by the Nominating Committee are 1) a need for a co-clerk for the Care and Concern Committee, 2) should there be a shelter committee now that Exeter Meeting is taking over this responsibility 3) should the Outreach and Environment Committees be laid down because they have been inactive for some time and 4) do we list activities within the meeting that are not structured as committees?

The Meeting reached consensus that the shelter committee and the environment committee be laid down. If an environmental project comes up, it will be managed by the Peace and Social Concerns Committee. The Outreach Committee with Janet Lamborn as convener will try to become active again. The Meeting's link to BICA (Berks Intercultural Alliance) will be under the Peace and Social Concerns Committee. The Meeting's support of Family Promise will be overseen by the Care and Concern Committee.

Taylor Lamborn urged committee clerks to prepare new descriptions for their committees that reflect these changes. They should be brought to the Meeting for approval and then posted at our website.

Thanksgiving service—November 22

Jim Morrissey announced that the Inter-Faith Council is sponsoring a Thanksgiving Service on the night before Thanksgiving at 7pm at the Church of the Brethren, State Hill Road. Friends have been invited to participate. Both Jim and Jeanne Elberfeld have been part

of the service in the past and consider it an honor and a wonderful outreach opportunity for our Meeting. Blair Seitz volunteered to represent us this year.

The Inter-Faith Council is a group of faith communities in Berks County. As Jim explained it, "It is about as organized as you inviting friends over for dinner." The reformed Jews, Muslims, Sikhs, Buddhists as well as Christian churches take part with the Unitarians presently taking the lead. A happy fellowship period follows the service.

Care and Concern Committee Report

Charlie Gilbert, co-clerk, reported that the committee is busy preparing for memorial services for B.J. Stillwell, November 25 and Mark Gunlefinger, December 9. More Quaker pamphlets are needed for distribution to our visitors. Ann Bodnyk will order 200 from PYM.

Regarding Larry the homeless person who was camping on our property, he is not been seen for some time. Charlie has removed most of his cardboard nest. Taylor Lamborn will sprinkle quick lime in the area for sanitary reasons.

Trustees Report

Taylor Lamborn, clerk of Trustees, told us that our insurance company sent an inspector to look over our building. The inspector wants us to install fire alarms with outside monitors and bring in an electrician to determine if our fuse box is adequate for our needs. Taylor said this may lead to our changing insurance companies. Most PYM meetings have their insurance through PYM.

Pat Jackson and possibly one other RMM representative will attend a workshop on safety in our places of worship, Thursday, November 16 at the Goggle Works.

- Bonnie Knutsen

Open House at Maiden Creek

Janet Lamborn gives the following account of her day as a hostess to visitors on the BARN tour who came to see Maiden Creek Meetinghouse, Saturday, October 14, 2017.

Despite having worked all night, I was able to get some fresh cut, fall flowers and arrive at the meeting house around 8:30am. I put the flowers in a vase on the front of stove so that people would see them as they walked in. The two pots of fall flowers were on top of each stove. The first stove also had some pamphlets and the second stove some small pumpkins. I set up a snack table near the second stove. The snacks included single serving pretzel bags, "Gala" apples (locally grown), water, and Oreo cookies with orange cream. One of the pumpkins had a painted ghost face, I liked to joke about it being from the grave yard.

There were 187 visitors, mostly middle age and older white people with some younger people and a few families with children of all ages. Many of the visitors wondered about the cemetery especially around the marked graves. One person asked whether there are any famous people in the cemetery. I answered by talking about the Parvins. Other people asked about the flags for the soldiers in a Quaker cemetery. Only one person asked about the condition of the boxes that were moved when the cemetery was moved. There were no in-depth questions about finding relatives or how we know who is buried where.

Most people were curious about the structure of the Meetinghouse (especially the wall) and the move from the original location. They were very impressed. Others asked where the minister would stand and whether or not the building is still being used. Talking about the cushions allowed me to tie Maiden Creek to the Reading Meeting, which most people expressed some additional curiosity.

I was able to talk about the basic structure, the furniture, the stoves, the move, as well as Quakerism Faith and Practice and Quaker testimonies. Lots questions were asked, but mostly just curious ones. No in-depth questions were asked. Pamphlets about Maiden Creek and Reading Meeting ran out about 1 pm. Some people also picked up other pamphlets that were near the bulletin board. I made copies of the information in Dad's folder. I hid Dad's folder but left the copies out in case I needed to refer to them. Some of those copies are missing, thus I think some visitors found them and took some home with them. Several visitors were fascinated with the desk from the school house and opened up the desks to see what was inside them.

I had a good time greeting and talking with the visitors. However, no one was seeking any significant information about Quakerism or the structure of the building or details about the cemetery. Our visitors were seeking an interesting few hours of visiting all the places on the tour. The farm with the alpacas and llamas was the one location people wanted to see.

As an Outreach message, the visitors now know that Quakers are not extinct and are active today. I made several references comparing modern Quakers to historical Quakers. Hopefully, at least a few people will want to look up more information. Who knows where that will lead.

The visitor I remember best is a lady that grew up in Germany during "the war." It was the Quakers that gave the school children the one hot meal a day after the war. She described carrying a special "recycled" tin coffee can every day to school and that each day it would be filled up with good hot food for her to eat, once per month they also received one Hershey candy bar.

Towards the end of the day, the BARN volunteer said that I did a nice job of engaging the visitors. He said the visitors stayed longer and asked more questions than they otherwise might have.

From the Treasurer

RMM appreciates and depends upon contributions from members and attenders to sustain the worship community activities, operating expenses (utilities, insurance, etc.), support to PYM/Caln/FGC, and maintenance of the 6th Street property and Meetinghouse.

For those who are making contributions in December, the treasurer kindly asks that you not wait to the very end of the month. In order for contributions to be applied to 2017 income, contributions must be RECEIVED no later than December 26th to allow time for deposit by December 29th, the last bank day of 2017. (Checks received in 2018 will be acknowledged as 2018 contributions, regardless of the check date, per IRS regulations.)

Contributions should be made out to "Reading Monthly Meeting" and can be hand delivered or mailed to the treasurer at:

Reading Monthly Meeting
c/o Ann Bodnyk, treasurer
PO Box 148
Kutztown, PA 19530-0148

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Happy Birthday to Jim Morrissey, 11/14,
Devin Hughes, 11/26, Rachael Hughes, 12/2,
Roger Lawn, 12/5, Henry Hughes, 12/9,
Chris Field, 12/10, Susan Dareneau, 12/13,
Darl Hoopes, 1/1, Tom Hughes, 1/1, and
Jeanne Elberfeld, 1/6

Hold in the Light Ian Lange, son of Jean Pedersen and Kai Pedersen, who is recovering from surgery for colon cancer. He is resting at home in West Reading. His future will be challenging with chemo therapy at Reading Hospital and more planned surgeries. Happily, his daughter, Eden, now living in California, will be coming home to be with him for the holidays.

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Hold in the Light the family and friends of B.J. Stillwell as they celebrate her life on Saturday, November 25, 12 noon at the Meetinghouse. B.J. died October 5 at the age of 89. Fellowship and then burial at Maiden Creek will follow. Fran Hoopes, Hospitality Committee is the contact for food donations.

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Hold in the Light the family and friends of Mark M. Gunlefinger as they celebrate his life at a memorial service on Saturday, December 9 at 2pm at the Meetinghouse. Mark died on November 6 at the age of 64. He is survived by his wife, Marie, his children Kyle and Holly and his stepdaughters, Elizabeth Mailie and Kelly Maillie.

Fellowship with light finger foods will follow the service. If you plan to bring food, please contact Bonnie Knutsen, hospitality committee.

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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.

Growing "Up" in the New Year

The Friendly Readers are looking forward to meeting on Monday, January 15, 2018 to share our experience of reading *Falling Upward* by Richard Rohr.

"In *Falling Upward*, Father Richard Rohr—the founder of the Center for Action and Contemplation—offers a new paradigm for understanding one of the most profound of life's mysteries: how our failings can be the foundation for our ongoing spiritual growth. Drawing on the wisdom from time-honored myths, heroic poems, great thinkers, and sacred religious texts, the author explores the two halves of life to show that those who have fallen, failed, or "gone down" are the only ones who understand "up." We grow spiritually more by doing it wrong than by doing it right." (from the inside flap)

This should be an inspiring and uplifting read, and we hope you can join us. There are two copies of this book available through the public library system. Let Chris Field know if you would like to have her purchase a copy for you for \$13.50.

Chris Field

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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

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The Last Word

"Pick the life you want. I chose to live a life of joy and I am thankful to all who have made it so."

Mark Gunlefinger



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 January newsletter to Bonnie Knutsen, bknutsen@ptd.net by First Day, January 14. 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

Mailing Address: PO Box 148
Kutztown, PA 19530-0148
Clerk of Exeter Meeting: Paul Kerr