

The Herndon Light



4th Month 5, 2020 A Newsletter of Herndon Friends Meeting - Quakers - Reston & Herndon Virginia 266

Due to Coronavirus restrictions, all events were online, via Zoom

4/11 – 10-12 a.m. – Student Peace Awards Committee meeting

4/12 - Easter Sunday Meeting for Worship

4/19 – 9 a.m. First Hour Discussion - “Quakers by the numbers” – Paul Murphy will lead

4/26 - Earth Day afternoon game, arranged by Margaret Fisher and Greening committee



Query: Listening

- *When is it hardest for me to be ready to listen?*
- *To what extent do I open myself to the risks of listening?*
How have I been changed by deeply listening to another, to God, to nature?

- *How does my own perception affect the way I understand what others say?*

Advices

Listening to the Spirit, to the Inward Teacher, enables us to hear “where the words come from”¹ when others speak.

Herndon Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends holds Meeting for Worship at 660 Spring Street in Herndon each First Day (Sunday). Hymn singing begins at 10:15 am. An unprogrammed Meeting for Worship begins at 10:30 am and lasts about one hour. After worshipping with adults for 10-15 minutes, children and teenagers attend First Day School classes until the end of Meeting for Worship. The building is wheelchair accessible. For more information call the Meeting’s telephone answering machine at 703-736-0592. The Newsletter Editor is Jay McClendon. E-mail bluejay825@gmail.com Newsletter assembled addressed and mailed by Stacey LaRoy. Correspondence and contributions can be sent to PO Box 88 Herndon, VA 20172 WEBSITE <https://www.fgcquaker.org/cloud/herndon-friends-meeting>

The Care Coordinating Committee is available for Friends in need. If you need assistance because of an illness or other emergency, contact Priscilla Chamlee at dandpchamlee@gmail.com; or Fred Cresson at cresson4@verizon.net, or Margaret Rogers at margaret.anne.rogers1@gmail.com, or Bert Curtis at bertedits@gmail.com

Hearing truth as others understand it is a way of deepening our own faith. Just as compassionate listening can be a healing experience, inattentive conversation can be unkind and hurtful. Undivided attention is a precious gift. Speak with your own, authentic voice, using the terms true to your experience. Encourage and welcome others to do the same. Read between the lines. Listen between the words.

Voices

Listening is a rare happening among human beings. You cannot listen to the word another is speaking if you are preoccupied with your appearance, or with impressing the other, or are trying to decide what you are going to say when the other stops talking, or are debating about whether what is being said is true or relevant or agreeable. Such matters have their place, but only after listening to the word as the word are being uttered. Listening is a primitive act of love in which a person gives himself to another's word, making himself accessible and vulnerable to that word.

William Stringfellow, 1973

With the gift of listening comes the gift of healing, because listening to your brothers and sisters until they have said the last words in their hearts is healing and consoling.

Catherine de Hueck Doherty, c. 1975

When listening, Friends need to be aware that certain words carry powerful emotional weight for them personally, and that they may hear meanings which reflect their own emotions and sensitivities rather than the intentions of the speaker. Each person is encouraged to be faithful in using the language which feels authentic and

appropriate to their message, and those listening are encouraged to hold the actual words as lightly as possible, while seeking to be open to the Spirit which enlivens them.

New England Yearly Meeting, 2006

Never before did there seem so many things to be done, to be said, to be thought; and in every direction I was pushed and pulled, and greeted with noisy acclamations of unspeakable unrest. It seemed necessary for me to listen to some of them, and to answer some of them, but God said, 'Be still, and know that I am God'. Then came the conflict of thoughts for the morrow, and its duties and cares; but God said 'Be still'. And as I listened, and slowly learned to obey, and shut my ears to every sound, I found, after a while, that when the other voices ceased, or I ceased to hear them, there was a still, small voice in the depths of my being that began to speak with an inexpressible tenderness, power and comfort.

John Edward Southall, c. 1900

As we learn from each other, we may initially need to translate the words other Friends use to describe their faith, much as we would a foreign language. With practice this becomes easier, and although we may never adopt their language as our own, we are enriched and brought closer to each other by the ongoing practice of being able to listen outside the comfort of our own religious vocabulary.

New England Yearly Meeting, 2006

I am not talking about listening with the human ear. I am talking about "discernment," which means to perceive something hidden and obscure. We must listen with our spiritual ear, the one inside, and this is very different from deciding in advance what is right and what is wrong

and then seeking to promote our own agenda. We must literally suspend our disbelief and then listen to learn whether what we hear expands or diminishes our sense of Truth.

Gene Knudsen Hoffman, 2003

Authentic listening is an act of love. To listen is to become vulnerable, to risk being drawn into someone's suffering, to expose our assumptions to challenge. Listening can require great courage, which is why we will often tolerate injustice or even strike out in violence rather than risk listening.

Beyond Borders Newsletter, 2010

Simple, respectful, prayerful listening is at least as good for the soul of the listener as for the person listened to.

It is a powerful discipline for the "listener" to try to listen without agenda, without the compulsion to help, abandoning the need or desire to appear knowledgeable, wise or comforting. There may be no more tellingly difficult spiritual practice than the effort to receive what is being said by someone else hospitably, without editing, without correction, without unsolicited advice. Yet it is this open listening that makes room for the Spirit of God to be present in the midst of the interaction, illuminating and guiding what is taking place.

Patricia Loring, 1997

Our greatest Treasure [which Friends have to offer a hurting world] is listening – listening to God for nurture and direction, listening to the pain and desire for justice and peace in the human community, listening for our gifts and the way to give them.

Georgia Fuller, 1995

Since we believe that there is in each person something divine, or what Jefferson called a moral sense, we are naturally called upon to listen to what other persons have to say, to what their hopes and aspirations and concerns are at the deepest level to which we can reach. There are many occasions where such listening is needed, and part of what it means to be a Friend in the world today is to slow down and listen carefully on at least some of those occasions.

Newton Garver, 1983

Careful listening is fundamental to helping each other; it goes beyond finding out about needs and becomes part of meeting them. Some would say that it is the single most useful thing that we can do. Those churches that have formal confession understand its value, but confession does not have to be formal to bring benefits. Speaking the unspeakable, admitting the shameful, to someone who can be trusted and who will accept you in love as you are, is enormously helpful.

Britain Yearly Meeting, 1999

Friends responded out of the silence. One spoke of the difficulty trying to comfort someone with words and has found that merely being present can be enough.

Meeting for Business 04/05/20

The 31 Friends present introduced themselves. Clerk **Inga Erickson** reviewed the agenda.

Recording Clerk Cathy Tunis briefly summarized the Minutes from the prior Meeting for Business.

Communication and Outreach Committee **2019 Year-end report**

Jay McClendon read the report on behalf of the committee. The report is below

First Quarter 2020 Treasurer's report

Terence McCormally said contributions were quite good in the first quarter due to some generous Friends. Gifts to other organizations have been distributed.

The contributions to William Penn House and FCNL were submitted together to FCNL, but the Treasurer learned that they are still separate financial organizations and contributions should be made separately. An additional amount of \$300 was sent to William Penn House as a result. A \$250 annual gift to Virginia Interfaith Center on Public Policy was issued for this year and next year it will be a \$150 line item in the budget.

If the BYM 2020 camping season is cancelled this summer, and if parents decide to seek a refund of camp fees, the Treasurer hopes that the portion of the fees that was supported by an HFM scholarship would be left with BYM as a contribution to the camping program. The \$60,000 that was set aside for capital projects was withdrawn from the Friends Fiduciary Fund before the market crash. Abbey Compton is working with the Embury Rucker Shelter to determine whether they prefer sandwich making supplies or financial contributions at this time. **An additional \$1,000 contribution to Cornerstones was proposed and approved by the Meeting.**

Inga proposed that we change the name of our "Family Emergency Fund" to "Friends Emergency Fund" to better reflect the fund's intention. **Terence** commented that it may be difficult to change this with the bank but that we can certainly use the new name internally. We were reminded

to be tender with those who don't remember this new name, but Friends united in recognizing the importance of making the change.

House and Grounds Committee

Dave Wilkins gave updates of activities so far this year. The meetinghouse carpet in both rooms was steam-cleaned at a cost of \$330 this past week, and facilitated by **Harry Tunis**.

The Herndon Historic Preservation Board approval process for the new solar panels and meetinghouse roof is in progress and will be discussed at a Board hearing on April 15.

The mulching and weeding will be carried out by professionals at a cost of \$1,150, more than the \$500 planned in the budget, but justified in the circumstances since we will not be able to do this work ourselves. Margaret Fisher commented that this is also a way to support local laborers. The Treasurer assured us that this amount could be covered by the existing budget.

Inga read a note from **Nikki Richards**, written on behalf of the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), thanking us for our recent financial contribution.

Liz Willson is our current liaison to AFSC and promised to keep us up to date on their activities.

Announcements

Margaret Rogers reported that the Student Peace Awards reception was held successfully on March 1, before the restrictions on community gatherings.

Certificates will be distributed to students at the discretion of their committee representatives, since award assemblies will not be held. She also reminded us of

the Student Peace Awards annual committee meeting on Saturday, April 11, 10 -12 noon, which will be held via Zoom.

Religious Education

Jolene Smith reported for Religious Education that they are trying to find ways to keep the young people in our Meeting engaged during this time, without actually having First Day School. She met with BYM RE Committee members yesterday, where other local Meetings described how they are doing this. The report on that call will be distributed to the committee.

Hospitality

Cat Wilkins reported for Hospitality that since there will be no Easter Potluck or egg hunt next week, they are trying to come up with some activities to replace that.

Kindra Whomsley will post a scavenger hunt game that the kids can participate in. The list will be sent out on the list serve and on Facebook, and will challenge participants to find things on the list and photograph them.

Inga Erickson read a poem entitled "Wash Your Hands" by Dori Midnight and we settled into closing worship.

Communications & Outreach Committee Year-End Report, 2019

Committee Members

Kim Glazer, Margaret Fisher, Stacey LaRoy, Jay McClendon (Clerk), **Marguerite Miller** (Change Team), **Lynn Nagle** (Change Team), **Margaret Rogers, Cathy Tunis, Kindra Whomsley, and Camryn Joy Williams.**

Summary

Our main activities this year were focused on outreach to specific communities through social media (which we assumed to include younger persons, digital natives, and heavy internet users), LGBTQI+, and people of color. Several members have commented that C&O "seems to be doing something right," as, empirically, we've seen awareness, interest in, and attendance at our Meeting grow.

Social Media

We enhanced our internet presence on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, and saw substantial increases in engagement and involvement across all three platforms.

For example, Facebook page likes have increased almost six-times since the committee was formed, from about 28, to 118. Our engagement metrics are also high.

We have 48 followers on Twitter, 62 on Instagram, and 128 followers on Facebook that number is higher than page likes and can be a better way of tracking how many people are actually seeing the page rather than committing, via liking, to receiving our information in their newsfeeds regularly.

People of Color

In January and early March 2019, **Marguerite Miller** and **Lynn Nagle** participated in antiracism training arranged and coordinated by BYM.

On June 7 and June 14, the Change Team coordinated book discussions on "Between the World and Me" by Ta-Nehisi Coates. Soon afterward, Marguerite compiled a list of "Actionable Ideas" from notes she had taken during both book discussions.

Copies of "Actionable Ideas" were given to some of the HFM committee clerks; copies were also distributed to members of the

Communication and Outreach Committee at a C&O meeting in August.

Marguerite and Lynn attended a workshop at BYM Annual Session where members/attenders from many different monthly meetings shared ideas on antiracism, including activities implemented at individual monthly meetings.

In the Fall, the Change Team extended BYM's invitation to be a part of a Change Group and presented BYM's Declaration on Antiracism and related queries (which HFM adopted) to the Communication and Outreach Committee and the Religious Education Committee. In late Fall 2019, Marguerite and Lynn began planning for book discussions on two other antiracism books to be held in January 2020.

LGBTQI+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual, and Pansexual)

We continued our participation in DC Pride and for the first time, in Reston Pride, which was in its second year. We chose this event because of its ties and presence in the immediate community, and because it was a way to demonstrate our longstanding inclusion and affirmation of LGBTQI+ persons. The latter effort was led by **Stacey LaRoy, Andrew LaRoy, and Camryn Joy Williams**, who secured and staffed, along with other members and attenders, a table at the event. At the table, they engaged with festival attenders and distributed T-shirts, stickers, and other tokens to passersby.

Here is the text of the report prepared by Stacey LaRoy:

On June 1st, 2019, the first day of Pride Month, Herndon Friends Meeting celebrated.

We celebrated freedom to be our true selves. We celebrated living in our progressive and diverse area.

For some of us, it was a celebration of meeting other people like us, and people who were not judging us for being different.

For many of us, it was a celebration of being able to freely and lovingly support our friends, families, neighbors, and others of the LGBTQIA+ community.

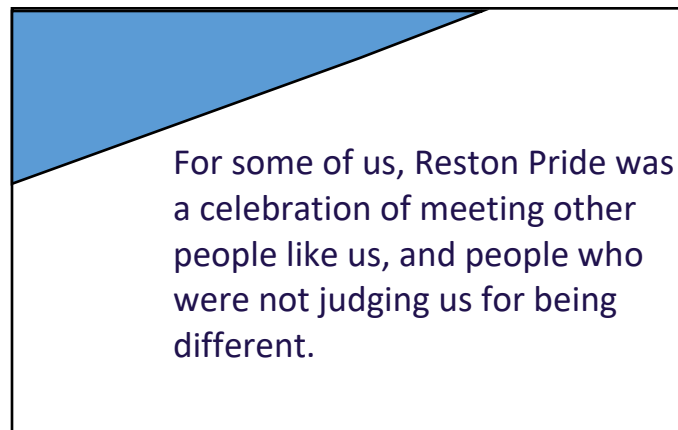
There were all ages represented.

Over 5,000 attended the 2nd Annual Reston Pride Festival

at Lake Anne. This was more than 4-fold the attendance of last year's Inaugural Reston Pride Festival.

Young people, enjoying connecting with others and expressing themselves through the vibrancy of color, music, and laughter. Older people, many in groups of two, enjoying the freedom of holding hands in public without being stared at or harassed.

And so many other ages and walks of life in between.



We had visitors at our booth almost the entire time- and there was never a dull moment.

Joyous laughter, lots of great questions asked, and several thoughtful answers given.

Many were excited to hear about our stance and history of standing up for the rights of, and affirming the LGBTQIA+ community.

Some were even happily surprised. We connected with them in a meaningful way that we hope will leave a long lasting positive mark on the community when they think of Quakers and Herndon Friends. We gave away little trinkets that made some people smile, and got the attention of others.

We handed out *lots* of informative flyers about Herndon Friends and Quakers. We even connected with local Quakers who did not know of us yet.

This was done with the generous and enthusiastic help of many Friends!

Those who helped in alphabetical order, by first name:

Abby Burford--- helped with attending booth and applying temporary tattoos

Andrew LaRoy--- helped with planning, building, attending, and tearing down booth

Camryn Joy Williams--- helped with planning, booth attending assistance

Connie Ortiz--- helped with attending and breaking down booth, and poster design.

Ian Beatty--- helped with building and decorating booth- yay rainbows!

Jay McClendon--- helped with planning and decision making

Jodi Rose Beatty--- helped with building, attending, breaking down booth, and poster design, lead rainbow!

Kim Glazer--- helped with attending booth, great answers to questions, and snacks!

Lauren (Ren) Demies-Ortiz--- helped attend and tear down booth, brought some giveaways

Leah Nash Craig--- helped attend and added some beautiful chalk designs that attracted attention

Linda Jacobs--- helped attend booth, engaging many people!

Lynn Nagle--- helped with attending booth and answered questions!

Marguerite Miller --helped with building, decorating, attending, and breaking down booth, and poster design

Stephenie Overman--- helped with photographs

I think part of what attracted people to our booth was that there were several of us there talking, laughing, playing, and working together- truly enjoying each other's company.

I believe the Spirit of Herndon Friends was well represented by this more than anything else.

Friends who came by to support and visit:

Aimee Karman, Amy Shinkman, Antonia Nagle, Bella Beatty (Jodi's pup, attracted a lot of attention to our booth for a while!) **Cathy Tunis, Ebba Shinkman, Greg Beatty, Harry Tunis, Jack Shinkman, Jareth Beatty, Julie Sibbing, Maria Lewis, Max Nagle, Mina Garcia,** and **Steve Taylor.**

-Jay McClendon

Herndon Friends Meeting
660 Spring Street
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