



Plymouth Monthly Meeting Newsletter

Meetings for Worship

First Day Meeting: 11:15 am
First Day School: 11:30 am
Fourth Day Meeting: 7:00 pm
Fifth Day Meeting with PMFS:
8:45 am

Address: 2150 Butler Pike,
Plymouth Meeting, PA 19462

Sixth Month, 2020

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June 2020

Tues	June 9	7:00 pm	PMFS Graduation
Sun	June 14	9:30 am	Worship & Ministry
Sun	June 21	9:00 am	Meeting for Business
Sun	June 28	10:00 am	Quaker Speak

Summer 2020

	Aug 2	9:00 am	Zoom Quarterly Meeting – focus on communications Rebecca will send out the Zoom link
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- All First Day Meeting for Worship will begin at 11:15. You may join us any time after 11am and settle in.
- Midweek meeting for Worship will begin Wednesday at 7:00 pm
- All meetings until further notice will be conducted via Zoom

LINKS AVAILABLE ON THE NEXT PAGE

- Music Circle is **still on** every Sunday from 2:00-4:00 pm until further notice via Zoom (contact Bill Alberts for an invitation) billalberts@verizon.net

Cancellations:

- Junior Friends/Middle School Friends gatherings cancelled until further notice
- Annual Party and Annual Picnic have been postponed/cancelled

Queries

Witnessing in the World

- **Witnessing in the World: Ministry of Outreach**

How does our meeting communicate Friends' presence and principles to the wider community?

How does our meeting join with other faith communities in worship, in spiritual dialogue and in social action?

What are we doing to invite persons to attend our meetings for worship, to welcome them when they come, to listen sensitively to their needs and hesitations and to encourage their continued attendance?

How do I share my spiritual life and experience with others?

Does my life as a Friend attract others to our religious society?

What opportunities have I taken to worship with people from other religious and cultural backgrounds and work with them on common concerns?

Meetings for Worship will continue as Zoom Meetings

Hope you all continue to be safe and healthy during these days of COVID-19. It is a challenge to stay in touch when we do not gather at our Meeting House for worship or events. Our benches have been empty now going on two months. One of the ways of continuing as community with one another is by participating in our virtual Meetings for Worship. The Zoom log in information is being kept the same for these two worship opportunities. Plymouth Monthly Meeting is gathering virtually twice a week for virtual worship during this time of COvid-10 separation.

- ❖ Firstday (Sunday 11:15am)
- ❖ Midweek (Wednesday 7:00 pm)
- ❖ PMF School worship (Thursday morning at 9:00 am)
- ❖ Meeting for Business on the third Firstday of the month at 9:00 am

New log in information below. Please discard previous login information as there have been updates to the zoom program that are not included in the prior meeting IDs. If you have difficulty please call Dave 484-804-3668

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/899967067?pwd=UE5oaJNDdFIZc00raU92KzIXNk9NQTO9><<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/899967067?pwd=UE5oaJNDdFIZc00raU92KzIXNk9NQTO9%20>>

Meeting ID: 899 967 067
Password: 013830
646 558 8656 US (cell phone)



Our 2020 graduates

Magna Mrozinski from Abington Friends
Eva O'Melvin from Gynedd Mercy
Clara Schatz from PW

A Quaker Vigil by Carole Coffin

The sound of crunching gravel was welcome at our meeting house on June 7th as the parking lot began to fill up with cars once again. Nearly 30 people properly masked and bearing signs gathered to bear witness at the wall, to remember and mourn George Floyd and the long list of those who came before him, to echo and help sustain Black Lives Matter, and to support Evan Gorski and the burgeoning movement toward Equality for All.

If this peaceful demonstration had been envisioned as a traditional Quaker silent vigil, it was simply not to be. These chatty Quakers had not met in person for over 12 weeks and had much to talk about. Standing at the wall we were met with community members driving by, out to enjoy the beautiful day, and who contributed to a spirited atmosphere with honking horns (including one incredibly impressive fog horn rivalling the likes of the Queen Mary II), cheerful waves bright with promise, shouts of encouragement and supportive thumbs-up and peace signs. This welcomed celebration of the release of many layers of pent-up emotions, thoughts, ideas and perspectives was a lovely beginning. Now we must, with the help of God, continue the hard work of sustaining the energy, the excitement, the spirit of this long overdue and hard won opening to the total eradication of racism in our society.



Statement from Home & Care

Abington Quarterly Meeting's Home & Care Committee announces temporary changes to its Guidelines to provide assistance during the CoVid-19 pandemic. From now until December 31, 2020, members of Monthly Meetings in Abington Quarter do not have to meet the requirement of membership for at least 3 years. We recognize that some newer members may be experiencing financial difficulties due to loss of jobs, business closures, or illness. This assistance can cover expenses such as mortgages, rental payment, utilities, food, and medical costs. It does not apply to school tuition. We will review this deadline in December and extend it if necessary.

Home & Care also announces a new agreement with the Abington Quarter Fund, which will provide funding for assistance for active Attenders of Monthly Meetings in Abington Quarter. This arrangement will allow Home & Care to assist Attenders, which has not been possible due to the restricted funds available to the committee. This assistance does not apply to school tuition. All applications and processing of the assistance will be done IN CONFIDENTIALITY by the Home & Care Committee. We are grateful for the support of the Quarter as these two committees work together to meet the needs of members and attenders of our Monthly Meetings. For more information or to apply for assistance, contact Home & Care Administrator: REBECCA CRATIN 215-542-8738.

New Plymouth Monthly Meeting Web Site

Our Monthly Meeting has decided to build a new web site using a platform that is made for churches. Our current website <https://www.quakercloud.org/cloud/plymouth-friends-meeting> had been a step forward in providing information about our Meeting and its events but is limited. We are entering into this venture along with other Meetings of our Quarterly Meeting. Our hope is to have a web site that is

- * More welcoming and informative to those new to Friends
- * Provide support services to the members of our Monthly Meeting
- * Integrated events and resources of our Quarter Meeting

If you would like to see the beginnings of this venture look at Byberry Meeting's web site. There are farther along with implementation. <https://byberry.churchinsight.com/> Once the site is functional we will be asking people to register on the site as there will be a public and a nonpublic side of the site. If you would like to help with this effort please contact David Miller at PlymouthMonthlyMeeting@gmail.com <mailto:PlymouthMonthlyMeeting@gmail.com> . We will be contacting each committee to discuss their use of the Web site.

Each of the committees in Meeting are figuring out how they can best use the website.

Sally Bishop's Activities for our Children

Here are some fun things for our children to try at home. Below are links for using vegetables from our kitchen and growing them into plants. It's garden time! Copy and paste these links into your browser:

<https://www.bhg.com/gardening/vegetable/vegetables/regrowing-food/>

<https://www.foodnetwork.ca/kitchen-basics/photos/vegetables-regrow-in-kitchen/#!/regrow-vegetables-potatoes>

Looking for something else to do this summer? Someone created Corona Virus Bingo. There are even more free Bingo ideas on this link, too.

<https://myfreebingocards.com/bingo-card-generator/edit/vw4dwj>

The Jane Addams Children's Book organization has put together activities for youth who are at home. "Arising from the words and work of our Jane Addams Children's Book Award authors and illustrators, we are creating and posting to social media three inquiry and social action activities a week for intermediate and middle school students at home during the coronavirus shutdown. All our activities to date are collected below. Click on the titles below each picture and find materials from the author and guiding questions for reading, writing, reflection, and action.

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Social Justice Online Learning for Kids in Intermediate and Middle School

<https://mailchi.mp/6d4548b63801/social-justice-online-learning-for-kids-please-share-widely?e=91dc0e3eb>

'Use Steady Loving Confrontation' - Social Justice Online Learning for Kids in Intermediate and Middle School

<https://mailchi.mp/7ecb310b7eed/use-steady-loving-confrontation-social-justice-online-learning-for-kids?e=91dc0e3ceb>

[The link below lists all the books they have currently offered with activities](http://www.janeaddamschildrensbookaward.org/home/social-justice-learning/)

<http://www.janeaddamschildrensbookaward.org/home/social-justice-learning/>

PYM resources for parents and children during these times of protest

Our children are watching, and listening, and learning. This is a deeply challenging time. Families are experiencing a global pandemic that has changed the shape of home and school life. There is economic uncertainty and hardship. Our children are watching and experiencing a nationwide response of fury and protest after the latest tragedies in centuries of Black lives brutally taken. For those of us who live with children and serve young people in our work, it is a moment to be present to them. Click the link for resources: <https://www.pym.org/talking-about-racial-injustice-with-children/>



Message from Brenda Crawley – Head of Plymouth Meeting friends School

Dear Alumni and Friends,

Decades ago, I began my journey into “diversity” work with fellow independent school educators from across the country. We quickly recognized that diversifying our schools was only one piece of the work. Supporting students of color and their families through mission,

philosophy, curriculum and program spurred a movement toward “multicultural education”—a shift from a quantitative approach to a qualitative one. We had the revelation that a school’s diverse student population meant little if those children were not supported and affirmed in the school community. We learned that tolerance was more relevant to dealing with gum stuck on the bottom of a shoe; but validation and acknowledgment were indications of visibility and respect. Tolerating diversity was not enough. Our students of color needed to be seen, valued and affirmed. As a woman of color, DEI (diversity, equity & inclusion) work is not something I can put down, postpone or avoid. In my role as a Quaker school leader, I have settled into a community that is grounded on the notion of not settling for injustice, stepping into conflict for the sake of what is right, and standing up for the rights of others. This is what we teach our children: stand up for good; stand up for others; stand up for those who need you to lift your voice on their behalf.

A few days ago I learned that Evan Gorski, a PMFS alum and engineering student at Temple University, was brutalized by Philadelphia police during a peaceful protest on Monday. The senseless violence imposed on Evan included being beaten and suffering through a police officer’s knee pressing his head and neck to the pavement. The parallel to George Floyd’s demise is startling. Evan was standing up for a fellow protestor: standing up for good. I do not know Evan; I have never met him. And yet I have. He is every Plymouth Meeting Friends School student who learns that they have a voice. He is every Pre-K student who asks “why” and every sixth grader who says, “why not”. This week, Evan chose to step into the fray and not turn away. His actions were both life-saving and life-threatening. What could move an individual toward such risk and danger besides the combination of intention and hope?

Now, more than ever, our local and national communities are faced with answering a call to action. We can no longer claim to be part of one human race when some people are treated inhumanely because of race. It is not enough to not be racist. We must strive to be anti-racist. It is not enough to be an activist. We must choose to be active. In our PMFS community, we have the opportunity to build upon the partnership between school and home as we talk about, teach and learn lessons of love, respect and honor for all people. This is the only way to uproot the hate and fear that spur such senseless violence.

I learned a few years ago that an ally is someone who stands behind you, should you need help. An accomplice, however, is someone who stands beside you, at the ready. An accomplice accepts that life-saving work can be life-threatening; yet they do not turn away. We can move toward intention and hope while holding fast to our Quaker values. At our core, we believe that there is that of God in everyone. We can take action. We can be accomplices.

In peace and with intention, Brenda C. Crawley - Head of School

Opening of the Meeting House in times of Covid-19

by Dave Miller

We have entered our 3rd month as a faith community but physically distant from one another. As with the rest of the world we have learned new ways to interact as the covid virus lives among us. Reaching for a mask when you go out is the same as putting on your shoes. Keeping an appropriate distance is a challenge as we long for human communion one with another, 6 feet, then 4 feet, then 2 feet - oops step back – 6 feet as we greet one another. Our Meeting benches sit empty as some of the fellowship sit back in their desk chairs, lounge on the sofa with our beloved as they participate in the new virtual world of Zoom-ing or Team Space-ing .

Over time the novelty of virtual worship resides and across the Delaware valley and reaching out into the Southern and western states Friends gather in virtual worship that binds us and draws us toward the holy space we have come to know within. Others of our community cross this vale of distance by settling into intentional worship in a place without the technology; entering in through a garden, lakeshore, woodland.... It is a challenging time to be intentional about coming together as a faith community. It is also a time that is oh so necessary to come together as illness, loss of jobs, and anger haunt our society. Challenging, but so affirming when we seek to love and care for one another. It is strengthening as we seek God's will for us beyond the fear and shouting. It is healing as we gather strength to seek or grant forgiveness in these trying times.

Our Society is opening up. People are beginning to come together again with caution and precautions. As we begin the discernment process to reopen our Meeting House, we need input from all of our members and attenders, near and far. Meeting for Worship will be different from before the Covid virus visited. Some changes could be significant and may become permanent. There needs to be careful discernment about how technology will be used ongoing in Meeting for Worship. Currently worship is being conducted using a Zoom Meeting application on our computers and phones. When we do come back together there will be members who can not return to the Meeting House due to the continuing risk of infect which could be catastrophic for them or members of their family. In addition there are participants in our current Zoom worships that are joining us from a distance. They would very much like to continue participating in our worship when we gather in the Meeting House. Closer to our Meeting are Friends who no longer can drive or easily come in person but would like to continue being part of our worship, committee meetings and business meetings.

The use of virtual meetings has proven its worth in the Quaker community over the past 3 months. Now the discernment before us is how will it serve us as we come physically back together. If we choose to allow this technology into the meeting house then we must construct a system in which those who are present and those who are at a distance equally participate. We must be able to hear and see who is offering ministry be they in the Meeting House or at some distant location.

There is the technology aspect and the spiritual aspect of this brave new future. Ministry or an offering during Business meeting from a person must be valued equally without regard from

where they are worshipping. The technology must not intrude on the gathering of the meeting. How do we welcome the advantages that technology provides by eliminating physical distance without inhibiting our worship and worshipful decision making. Help with this discernment.

Two areas of discernment

1. How to manage the return to the Meeting house with the continuing risk of infection in our community?
2. Do we continue the use of technology to enable the inclusion of parts of our community that will not be able to return to worship in the Meeting House?

To help with discernment there are some advices and Queries listed below from Friends General Conference. We are also including on the last page of the newsletter a poll for you to enter your preferences and comments about opening the Meeting House. This poll can be accessed at the web address below or you can print and fill out the poll and scan and send it back to the Meetings Email or mail it to the Meeting House.

Please participate in this group discernment. Our Meeting has changed with the arrival of the virus. How it changes is up to the community. Our discernment will create a Meeting Community for the next generation.

Poll on the internet at:

<http://www.survey-maker.com/Q1XP1SMM>

Meeting email address

plymouthmonthlymeeting@gmail.com

Meeting Address

Plymouth Monthly Meeting
2150 Butler Pike
Plymouth Meeting, Pa 19462

FGC Advices and Queries about reopening Quaker Churches and Meeting Houses

Before you consider the queries, we thought it might be helpful to consider the following advices as a way to seed your discernment. If your meeting were to discern that it is time to reopen the meeting house, we encourage you to:

- Determine what committee(s), working group(s) or Friends will act as point people related to meeting house safety and hold responsibility for seeing reopening protocols implemented and followed.
- Follow (or exceed) the guidelines of your state and local health department. If your town or county does not have a health department, check out Interim Guidance for Communities of Faith from the CDC.
- Clean and disinfect frequently-touched surfaces before and after Meeting for Worship each time you have it. Be mindful of Friends with scent sensitivities and open windows in your meeting space to keep the fresh air circulating. If your Quaker community hosts Meeting for Worship multiple times in a day, consider staggering the start times (or offering them on different days) so

Friends have ample time to clean and disinfect the meeting space before each worship.

- Consider offering a virtual Meeting for Worship (if you're not already doing so). There will likely be Friends who feel safer worshipping from home until a COVID-19 vaccine is available. If you choose to have in-person worship and open it to meeting attenders online, consider using a Meeting Owl or a laptop with a built-in web camera and video conferencing software like Zoom. Send out the details for participating in worship virtually the day before via email (don't forget to send written directions for how to connect and participate online, too!). Some meetings are considering the idea that they will offer separate in-person and online worships based on the comfort level and needs of their members and attenders.
- Ask all attendees to wear face masks. While there is some debate about the degree of protection offered by face masks, all face masks worn properly seem to increase safety. Therefore, they are essential to protect Friends and participants with pre-existing health conditions and individuals who face a higher risk of contracting COVID-19. If visitors come to the meeting house without a mask, have spare masks handy or be prepared to encourage them to participate virtually or by phone from a safe distance outside the meeting house.
- Install hand sanitizer stations at the entrance of your meeting space and throughout it. If your Quaker community decides to hold worship outdoors, clearly identify hand sanitizer stations with signs and something hard-to-miss, like flowers or balloons, so Friends know they are available.
- Encourage social distancing. Meeting for Worship participants should sit or stand with a 6-foot radius of space around them at all times. Use non-physical forms of greeting when welcoming Friends into the meeting house and at the rise of meeting (try these no-contact greeting alternatives instead). If your worship room is traditionally full, consider having multiple worships to enable proper spacing between chairs.
- Temporarily suspend activities that are high-risk for spreading the coronavirus. This means not having hymnals out in the meeting space and not doing potlucks for a while. Group singing may be possible if it is held outside and everyone is wearing a mask. Childcare and First Day School are also possible so long as Friends consider following CDC guidelines for keeping children and volunteers safe. Also, stop using shared hand towels and use disposable paper towels in kitchens and bathrooms.
- Give opportunities for feedback after reopening the meeting house. Despite good planning, some safety issues may only become apparent when the first worship is held. Give ample opportunities for Friends to suggest ways to increase safety and increase confidence in the procedures being used.

Queries

- Reopening the doors of your meeting house amidst so much uncertainty, and when so many Friends in the FGC community face a much higher risk of contracting the novel coronavirus, is, as you know, not a decision to make lightly. Having read the advices, consider the following queries together (via phone or videoconference):
 - Does our meeting/church have the capacity to provide a sacred space that is reasonably safe and adheres to the regulations of our local health department and/or CDC guidelines?
- In other words, do we have the volunteers, social distancing resources (like face masks), cleaning supplies, meeting house space, and budget available to keep high-use surfaces clean and to create a 6-foot no-contact radius around each participant?
 - Will members and attenders of our meeting feel safe and comfortable enough to gather in-person if we reopen now? Will visiting Friends, newcomers, and spiritual seekers feel safe?
 - Do we have a communications process set up to share reopening protocols to new and returning Friends (wear a face mask, remain six feet apart, use no-contact methods of greeting) and to let community members and visitors know when in-person Meeting for Worship is cancelled?
 - From a public safety and pastoral care standpoint, are we prepared to address the consequences of an infected participant (with or without symptoms) attending in-person worship and potentially spreading the infection to people we know and love in our community?

Plymouth Monthly Meeting Poll about opening the Meeting House

(poll can be accessed and filled out at <http://www.survey-maker.com/Q1XP1SMM>)

1. As a person over sixty, I am ready to return to worship in the Meeting House
2. As a person under sixty, I am ready to return to worship in the Meeting House:
3. I think only the Meeting House Gathering Space (patio) should open for worship:
4. I am willing to help with extra cleaning, greeting, monitoring, setting up outdoors, etc.
5. I would attend small committee meeting or small group worship and abide by the Meeting's safety and disinfection protocols:
6. I would prefer and/or be willing to continue attending Meeting activities via Zoom, including worship and committee meetings through the fall.
7. If the Meeting House was reopened for in-person meetings, I would continue to use Zoom to access those gatherings:
8. Should groups begin using the Annie H Wilson room in the Fall with appropriate size limitations?

David Miller
d.j.miller@verizon.net
phone 484-804-3668

Berks Detention Center

Invitation to stand in support of the migrant families, who often include unaccompanied children and young mothers with very young children, continue to be held by Immigration and Customs Enforcement despite the fact that:

- 1) a court ruling to stop it (after sexual assaults by staff in years past) has been ignored
- 2) it is against the PA State Constitution
- 3) it is a county facility that the federal government has basically commandeered
- 4) in most cases the migrants being jailed have relatives in the United States who want to take them, or there are volunteer foster families willing to take them
- 5) THEY HAVE COMMITTED NO CRIMES
- 6) They are sometimes taken to court dates with no legal representation and no interpreter - even the unaccompanied minors!

Recent reports indicate that after taking NO mitigation measures for COVID19 initially, ICE began spraying an industrial disinfectant in these detention centers, and one detainee at Berks gave sworn testimony about the allergic reactions and respiratory problems caused by the industrial disinfectant. No one knows how many cases of COVID19 have occurred there because the government refuses to say and there is no public access. Keeping these extremely lonely, vulnerable and very young people locked up in confined conditions without proper care for months or years for the offense of being human is not acceptable. We are better than this.

The Shut Down Berks Coalition is not having a formal rally there in the next few weeks (although it has been active online and in lobbying actions in Harrisburg during the pandemic), but I feel called to stand witness for the migrants at this time at 1040 Berks Rd, Leesport, PA 19533 (just outside Reading PA).

I welcome everyone to join me on Sunday 21 June 2020 (assuming no thunderstorms), as a matter of testimony against this horrendous immorality.

2:00 Departure Plymouth

3:00 Arrival at Berks

4:00 Leave Berks

5:00 Home for dinner

There are numerous large shade trees; bring your own lawn chair.

There are restrooms about 2 miles away in local fast food restaurants (check on the way to make sure the restrooms are open).

The locked up migrants are often let out in a play yard in the afternoon so we will likely be able to see them from a distance, and shout words of love and support.

About 8 of us went last year and it was wonderful fellowship time, especially when the migrant children waved back from the play yard.

The detention of migrants simply seeking a better life is a form of systemic oppression against people of color that is related to the national movement for an end to racism and for criminal justice reform. If interested persons would like to car pool, let me know I will try to match people up.

Vincent O'Grady - vogrady@gmail.com



SAVE THE DATE: Naomi's keynote will occur on **Friday, July 31st, at 7pm EDT** online

Letting Ourselves Be Known... through worship

Marcelle Martin, a member of Swarthmore Meeting, has led workshops at retreat centers and Quaker meetings across the United States. She was the resident Quaker Studies teacher at Pendle Hill for four years and is a core teacher for the 9-month program, "Nurturing Faithfulness." On her blog, [A Whole Heart](#), she shares inspiration to help us be all that God has created us to be. She is the author of [Our Life is Love: The Quaker Spiritual Journey](#) and [A Guide to Faithfulness Groups](#). She lives in Chester, PA with her husband, Terry.

SAVE THE DATE: Marcelle will lead the Spiritual Formation Retreat on the evening of **Tuesday, July 28th** and join us for Opening Worship on **Wednesday, July 29th, at 7pm EDT** online.

Announcing our 2020 Annual Sessions Keynote

Naomi Madaras to keynote Annual Sessions

Naomi Madaras (pronouns: she/her) is a Master of Divinity candidate at Union Theological Seminary in New York. A graduate of Guilford College, Naomi served as the program coordinator at William Penn House before transitioning to seminary to pursue a career in chaplaincy. Her clinical training has been in hospitals and nursing homes in New York where she provides spiritual care to patients, families, and staff. Naomi focuses on interfaith community-building, death, and disability in her work. She is a member of Chambersburg Friends Meeting, a regular attendee at Brooklyn Friends Meeting, and grew up milking goats and climbing trees on a farm.

Letting Ourselves Be Known... through art!

Featuring City Love and Zenaida Peterson

In addition to their performances, both City Love and our artist-in-residence, Zenaida Peterson, will lead workshops for children and young people during the online Youth Program sessions! Watch for program updates from Children's Sessions, Middle School Friends, and Young Friends in coming weeks!

Also, look for information soon about the Yearly Meeting Poem project!

Zenaida Peterson

A Boston-based spoken word poet, Zenaida is a fire starter, a southern green witch and a queer of color who likes the wind chimes outside their window and giving rocks to people they love. Most recently Zenaida was on the House Slam team placing 3rd and organized the Feminine Empowerment Movement Slam, the first slam tournament for feminine people. Zenaida believes the softness and floral of people is silenced too often. Zenaida unwrites the lies they've been given. Zenaida also unwrites violence, misogyny, racism and their ancestors' curses.

SAVE THE DATE: Zenaida will perform on **Thursday, July 30th, at 7pm EDT** online

City Love

Making "music for the world we need," City Love is a West Philly social justice music and education group, using songs to spread love, hope, dialogue, justice, and healing. City Love has shared assemblies, workshops, and performances at schools, colleges, and conferences throughout the country and recently released a young children's album about race, honoring our differences, standing up for each other, equity, self-love, and belonging.

SAVE THE DATE: City Love will perform on **Saturday, August 1st, at 7pm EDT** online.

Registration will go live in early June..