



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,
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Third Month, 2020

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May 2020

Sun	May 10	9:30 am	Worship & Ministry
Sun	May 10	After Meeting	Quaker Speak
Sun	May 17	9:00 am	Meeting for Business

June 2020

Sun	June 7	7:00 pm	Care & Concern
Sun	June 14	9:30 am	Worship & Ministry
Sun	June 14	After Meeting	Quaker Speak
Sun	June 21	9:00	Meeting for Business

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

Cancellations:

- Strawberry Festival is cancelled for the year
- Junior Friends/Middle School Friends gatherings cancelled until further notice
- Celebration for the 50th Anniversary of PMFS Mexican exchange postponed until the Saturday after Thanksgiving
- Annual Party and Annual Picnic have been postponed/cancelled

Queries

Grounding for Transformed Lives: Equality & Justice

How does our meeting benefit from established patterns of prejudice, exploitation and economic convenience? What are we doing to change this?

How and how often does our meeting engage in a self-examination of its attitudes and actions regarding race, ability, gender, sexual orientation or class?

What steps are we taking as a meeting to inform ourselves about social injustice and ecological violence embedded in our political and economic systems?

What steps are we taking as a meeting to assure that our meeting and the committees and institutions under our care are respectful of the earth and its people?

Do I regularly examine myself for attitudes and behavior that indicate any hidden prejudice regarding race, gender, sexual orientation, disability or class?

How do my lifestyle choices affect—positively or negatively—the causes of justice and peace in our nation, the community of nations and the whole of creation?

How do I demonstrate in my way of living, and in what I teach my children, that love of God entails acknowledging “that of God in every person”?

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=UE5oa jNDdFIZc00raU92KzIXNk9NQ T09<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/899967067?pwd=UE5oa jNDdFIZc00raU92KzIXNk9NQ T09%20>>

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

Joining PMF School Worship

Meeting for worship: Thursday morning at 9am

As a security procedure for the children, please call the school office first to register your email address 610-828-2288.

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/329448091%C2%A0%C2%A0>

password: saplings

Quaker Speak

Quaker Speak discussions – Beginning February 9th after Meeting for Worship

On the second Firstday (Sunday) of the months February, March, April and May a Quaker Speak video will be shown in the Annie H Wilson room after Meeting for Worship. A discussion of the video will follow its showing. When we're back at the Meetinghouse, bring a simple lunch or sandwich and desert, fruit, and drink will be provided.

QuakerSpeak is a weekly video series on the YouTube channel. Friends of all different backgrounds (and types of Quakerism) are interviewed and asked core questions of our faith. QuakerSpeak interviews are personal and intimate. QuakerSpeak seeks to give viewers worldwide an experience that is entertaining, informative, inspiring, challenging, inviting, unifying and collaborative. New videos come out every Thursday. <https://quakerspeak.com>

Our first discussion on **February 9th** will be in response to the QuakerSpeak video: What do Quakers do in Silent Worship? Come and listen to what those on the video have to say about worship and then share with us as we consider how we as individuals here at Plymouth enter into and open ourselves to worship together. Additional resource for this topic is the Pendle Hill pamphlet – Four Doors to Meeting for Worship, Bill Tabor. Copies will be made available in the Meeting House.

You do not need to wait for our Firstday discussions to explore QuakerSpeak. Set aside some time during the week and explore topics of interest for you. Some examples of collections of videos are: Videos for Newcomers, Quaker Beliefs and Theology, Quaker Activism, Quaker History, Quaker Practice, Quaker Ministry. Each of these collections has many videos in them. New videos come out each week. If you find the videos of use to you consider making a donation on line to help the QuakerSpeak staff continue to travel and interview Friends. Homework for the Quaker Speak discussion on March 8th. Bring a favorite QuakerSpeak video you would like to share. Like our music circles, we will go around and view several videos on that day.

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.



Zoom Bookclub - Quaker Reading

Byberry Meeting is sponsoring a Zoom book club with books that have Quaker themes. Below is their invitation. This a good way to learn about why Quakers are Quakers.

Join us as we explore some novels, historical fiction and related storylines (not all fictional) that include a Quaker component. All are welcome, just send an email to ByberryQuakers@gmail.com requesting the log-in to the

bookclub.

The Bookclub will meet on the 2nd Monday of each month. Our first meeting will be May 11th at 7:00PM.

The first selection is: **"The Last Runaway" by Tracy Chevalier**. Chevalier sprang to fame with "The Girl with the Peal Earring", and has written 10 other best-sellers since that first novel. "Tracy Chevalier makes her first fictional foray into the American past in The Last Runaway, bringing to life the Underground Railroad and illuminating the principles, passions and realities that fueled this extraordinary freedom movement" (Source: Goodreads.com). Honor Bright, a modest English Quaker, moves to Ohio in 1850-only to find herself alienated and alone in a strange land. Sick from the moment she leaves England, and fleeing personal disappointment, she is forced by family tragedy to rely on strangers in a harsh, unfamiliar landscape. Nineteenth-century America is practical, precarious, and unsentimental, and scarred by the continuing injustice of slavery. In her new home Honor discovers that principles

count for little, even within a religious community meant to be committed to human equality. However, Honor is drawn into the clandestine activities of the Underground Railroad, a network helping runaway slaves escape to freedom, where she befriends two surprising women who embody the remarkable power of defiance. Eventually she must decide if she too can act on what she believes in, whatever the personal costs.

Some discussion points may come from this link on her website --

<https://www.tchevalier.com/reading-group-guide>

Sally Bishop's Activities for Children While Staying at Home

During this time many are working to keep things going – mail and deliveries, making food available, keeping transportation running, nurses, doctors, pharmacists and ones who work every day to help take care of us and keep us safe – police, firefighters, EMTs and first responders. Maybe our children can think of others that are working to take care of us and keep us safe. Children can write or draw messages of hope, faith and thanks and post them in their windows of their homes to let others know their hard work and efforts are appreciated.

Children could draw pictures to cheer up others when they see them. If you have colored chalk or washable paints at home, children could decorate their sidewalks with colorful pictures to say thanks or make pictures that will bring a smile to others. These are ways our children can feel they are doing something to help out and cheer their community neighbors and helpers on. Community is one of our Quaker Testimonies and is so relevant during these times.

<https://chicago.suntimes.com/coronavirus/2020/4/9/21215373/uplifting-messages-chicago-coronavirus-windows-chalk-sidewalks-pandemic>

https://madison.com/ct/news/local/education/local_schools/window-decorations-offer-recognition-for-essential-workers-cheer-during-pandemic/article_5c944772-f495-58fc-8629-ac47298966f2.html

Our children can feel they are helping do their part in making things go smoothly by asking them what they might like to do as something special to help another family member who might need help. Maybe making a cheerful card, clearing the table after eating, cleaning up after a meal, preparing a simple food treat to share, picking up laundry to be washed, offering to get someone else something to drink, contribute to a food shopping list, feeding a pet, organizing toys and straightening up, taking the trash out, sorting recycling or making their bed. Doing something that makes them feel like a helpful member of the family team has its own rewards. Small deeds are much appreciated.

Another idea that children might enjoy is making their own journal. Decorating a cover with pages stapled together or attached with string or yarn. They can write about whatever comes to mind and make daily entries with the date for each day. For some children it is easier to write about what they are thinking and feeling than to talk about what's on their minds. Journal

writing has been a practice of early Quakers and provides an opportunity to find clarity in our thoughts. If children need help in getting started with writing, they can be encouraged to write about the best and or worst thing that happened that day, their favorite tv show or movie or something they saw or heard. It's helpful if they write at a regular time each day and maybe their parents might start journal writing, as well. Of course, drawn pictures can be added to entries and maybe a digital journal is an alternative to hand writing.

<https://www.journalbuddies.com/journaling-resources/top-10-journal-writing-tips-for-kids/>

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.



Dave Miller's Thoughts about Business Meetings

The business of our Monthly Meeting continues even in the during these times when the COVID-19 virus keeps us physically apart from one another. The challenge of seeking God's will is always with us. Now that we meet in virtual meetings for worship and business, we are tempted to think it will be more difficult. Yet as we reflect, the required disciplines are the same when we are together in the same room or when we are together in a virtual zoom meeting. Friends business meetings are at least as important as our meetings for worship for corporate discernment of how the Divine Spirit will guide our faith community. There are many good references that introduce one to Friends distinctive way of doing business and they are all worth reading or attending if provided in workshops at Friends gatherings or locally at Pendle Hill. The effectiveness of the practice when fully entered into has been admired by many organizations outside of the Society of Friends and for a while in the early 2000's it was proposed as model for commercial business to imitate.

There are structural (if you will) aspects of the meeting for Business and there are there is the spiritual foundation that allows the structure to be of service in the search for the faithful response to God's leading will. A rough outline of the structure:

- A clerk that sits aside and listens and discerns the sense of the Meeting

- Participants
 - some who will present a topic for discernment
 - some who will consider what has been presented and offer questions seeking clarity or requesting/offering additional information to help fully understand the topic
 - some who hold all in prayer in their hearts of love

- Phases of the business meeting
 - centering/letting go of self
 - presentation of topic
 - time of clarification
 - obtaining a gathered understanding of the topic
 - consideration of topic as received
 - additional questions
 - growth of acceptance of proposed action or suggestions of an alternate path forward
 - discernment by the Clerk of the unity or disunity of the those gathered with the proposed action
 - Presentation of minute of action by the Clerk
 - Acceptance of the minute or acknowledgment of the lack of unity on the proposed minute
 - If approved, a breath prayer of thankfulness
 - If not approved, the holding over of the topic while Friends consider why they could not come to unity, revelation of new path or yielding (standing aside) to the original, or acknowledgment of the need for prayerful work to be continued search for unity in understanding God's will on the topic (holding over)

These aspects of business meeting structure rest upon how successful each individual is in entering into the first phase of the business meeting - centering/letting go of self.

How do we know that we are ready to enter into discerning God's will on a topic of business?

Bill Tabor, a life-long member of Ohio Yearly Meeting Conservative wrote about his five "Gut" feelings that he came to know as the indicators that he had come into that "inward space" where self-yielded to spiritual listening and faithful obedience to Divine will has occurred. The realization of now being ready for business he likened to stepping into a stream. The gut feelings also served as a signpost that he had stepped out of the stream and hence needed to return to that first phase of prayerful preparing before continuing to participate in business discernment.

Bill's five gut feelings are not a step 1,2,3... guide to successful centering. They are challenging and joyful inward transformations that occur as one is attentive and prayerfully yielding. The gut feelings are joyful because they are nurtured and experienced with the individuals of our beloved community. Love abounds as the gut feelings grow. The belly of love is what our best business meeting decisions are birthed from.

1. Joy in being together

"joy of coming together and being with these familiar faces. It is the joy of being again with the blessed fellowship.."

"It is the joy at feeling the organic connection with ... these people, joy at feeling our linkage with them through the Spirit and through our common work."

2. Joy at being with God

"the joy and awe and comfort at being once again in the presence of the Great Friend... the Healer.. the Forgiver... who can give such joy and peace"

"Admittedly, it is difficult to lay aside one's dep and passionate involvement in some concern to come before the meeting, but it can be done in the presence of the Great Friend"

"We are in the presence of the Absolute Other, something far greater than ourselves, yet something which is our Friend, bring us into alert , honest communion.

" we move into an alter state of consciousness where we become amazingly relaxed and amazingly alert at the same time"

3. Joy of Assurance

" as we rest in that Presence.. we feel our selves cradled, supported, held up by those everlasting arms"

"it is the deep assurance of being filled with the water of life...At this point there may be no words , only a sense of unity"

"It is as if we are entering a stream ... which is as real as stepping into a stream of water, so there is no doubt we are surrounded by that Stream of Living Unity."

4. Joy of Trust

"a deep feeling of trust, which we experience as the silence deepens and the power grows around us"

"trust in the immense Power at the heart of the universe, which is also in our own hearts"

"there is a deep trust in the process, the process by which God is at work in our individual lives."

"Only as we are given the grace in trust this Process are, we able to let go even a little bit of our personal and partisan obstacles to the working of God among us."

"willingness to let go and let God work among us, in us, in me, yes - change me."

5 Joy of Excitement

"This is the feeling of excitement, excitement about the unexpected, the unpredictable."

"Every time.. we enter business meeting there is a mounting sense of excitement as we come face to face with the utter unpredictability of God at work in our lives."

"..never know how it will affect the course of their lives forever, perhaps to take up a cause, or cross the ocean, or painfully to give up some cherished dream or concern. Yet in all that excitement, there is trust, trust."

Bill's personal experience of his gut feelings in Business Meeting are recorded in Pendle Hill Pamphlet #406 The Mind of Christ - Bill Taber on Meeting for Business, edited by Michael Birkel from Bill's papers after his death in 2005. I recommend reading the whole pamphlet. Bill was a conservative Friend, steeped in the Christian tradition of early Friends. He was eager to help people get beyond the words that may inhibit them from grasping the deeper universal meaning of their own personal spiritual growth. If Christian language is a barrier to you, give Bill's writing a try. If not read the pamphlet to experience The Society of Friends unique interpretation of the Christian experience in a life applied.



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..