

Reading Monthly Meeting

of the Religious Society of Friends

May 2015 Newsletter

Rome, April 21, 2015 - "You have to keep the land so that it can continue to be, as God wants it, the source of life for the entire human family."

- Pope Francis on Twitter

May Calendar

Opening Exercises — Care & Concern Committee

First Day, May 17 Caln Quarter worships at Bradford Meeting, 11 AM

Monday, May 18 Peace and Social Concerns Committee meets 7 PM in the Penn Room.

Thursday, May 28 Worship and Ministry Committee meets at 6:30 PM in Penn Room.

June Calendar

Opening Exercises — RE Committee

Monday, June 1 Berks Peace Community meets 7 PM at RMM. John H-Abrahall, contact.

First Day, June 7 Closing exercises. RMM Summer Picnic (in lieu of potluck) at Maiden Creek follows Meeting for Worship

Tuesday, June 9 Prepare supper for Opportunity House, 6 PM. Beth Finlay, contact.

First Day, June 14 Meeting for Business meets at Reading after Meeting for Worship

Save the Date:

Tuesday, June 30—Friendly Readers meet for strawberry shortcake and discussion of *All The Light We Cannot See* by Anthony Doerr, 6:30 PM at the home of Bonnie Knutsen. Chris Field, contact.

July 5—11 FGC Gathering 2015. Theme: *Seeking Wholeness*. Western Carolina U., Cullowhee, NC. Register now. Beginning June 1, late fee of \$60 for full-time or half-gathering registrations. May 31—closing date for registering children. June 10—closing date for registering high school program participants. For more, www.fgcquaker.org/connect/gathering/registration-details.

July 29—August 2 Annual Session 2015. Theme: *Open Our Eyes That We May See*, Muhlenberg College, Allentown, PA. For more, www.pym.org/annual-sessions-2015.

Spiritual Support

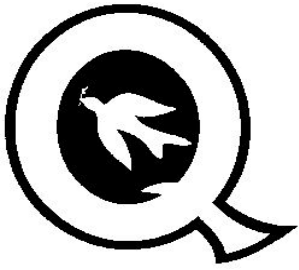
From time to time during the past few decades Reading Meeting has sponsored spiritual support groups. We have also called them worship sharing or spiritual discussion gatherings. We last did this in 2010.

Here is the query we used then to kick things off: "What is the Light and why should we follow its leadings? How does the Light help us move toward a future where our personal convictions can grow in the presence of great diversity of paths?"

Would members and attenders like to do this again? What should the meetings be like? How often should we meet? What kinds of topics should we consider?

Please let Roger Lawn or another member of the Worship and Ministry committee know if you are, or might be, interested or if you have questions or would like more information about what the experience could be like.

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



Draft Minutes— Reading Monthly Meeting for Business Fifth Month 10th day, 2015

Lee Pickett, clerk Jim Lamborn, recording clerk

Present: Ann Bodnyk, Chris Field, Peter Frank, Judy Geiser, Darl and Fran Hoopes, Taylor, Betty and Janet Lamborn, Roger Lawn, Jim, Nan and Joe Morrissey and Cys Sica

Minutes of the fourth month were approved as presented.

Ann Bodnyk presented the Treasurer's Report for April 2015. Year-to-date contributions are about 51% of budget.

For discussion or approval:

Outreach: Chris Field presented a proposal for having a Geocache site on the Meetinghouse grounds, perhaps under the handicap access ramp. Geocaching is an outdoor treasure hunting game using GPS-enabled devices. Participants navigate to a specific set of GPS coordinates and then attempt to find the geocache container hidden at that location. Players may take a trinket from the container and put in one of their own.

Having a geocache would be another way to make people aware that we are here. RE committee will also be involved in that the kids will help choose and create items to put in the container. This is approved.

June schedule: After some discussion, the schedule for June was determined. Closing exercises will be June 7. After Meeting for worship, the picnic in lieu of potluck will be at Maiden-

creek. Meeting for Business will be June 14. Maiden creek will open for the summer starting June 21. For the picnic, hospitality committee will coordinate foods and supplies, RE will have activities for kids, and Ann Bodnyk will arrange for a port-o-potty.

Shape-note singers. Peter Frank presented the annual request for the shape-note singers to use Maiden creek on September 5. This is approved.

Membership transfer: Lee read a letter from St Peter's UCC church, requesting that Brion Morrissey be released from Meeting membership as he joins the congregation there. This is approved. Lee will send a letter.

Worship and Ministry Committee Report

Roger Lawn reported that the committee is considering starting spiritual support groups again. They are asking for input from Friends on how this should be done. See the full report, *Spiritual Support*, on the front page of the newsletter.

- from Jim Lamborn

Exeter Meeting News

First Day, May 17 Visitation First Day at Bradford Meeting. Worship is at 11 AM.

Thursday, May 21 The Poetry Group meets at 6 PM at the Meetinghouse. This group meets the third Thursday of each month. All are welcome.

First Day, May 24 A small group of Friends will worship with Peggy Keck at 10 AM in her home.

Saturday, June 20 All day Sacred Harp Singing at Exeter Meetinghouse, beginning at 10 AM with a potluck lunch. All are invited to join in this event.

Congratulations to our Graduates

- Hannah Kerr on May 30 from the R.I. School of Design. She will be working in New York City.
- Rebecca Kerr on May 31 from Swarthmore. She plans to go on to medical school.
- Sam Kerr on June 6 from Governor Mifflin High School. He will attend Drexel University in the Fall, majoring in Biomedical Engineering.

- from Shirley Smith

Report on Demonstrations at the Family Detention Center, Leesport PA

About 17 Families who are seeking asylum are being detained under lock and key near Berks Heim. Recently there were two demonstrations across the street from the center with the goal being that the families be released and the facility closed. On May 2nd about 150 people of all ages including children came and listened to many speakers (photo on page 1). There were several Quakers and several other Faith Community representatives from Berks County and Philadelphia.

From Judy Geiser: "At one point a woman and a young girl, probably her daughter, appeared on their side and sat at a picnic table. They waved and waved to us. The demonstrators waved back and chanted in Spanish "You are not alone." I was moved and also very sad that they were not at liberty to walk across the road and join us."

The second demonstration on May 8th was a last minute gathering of about 15 Berks Faith Community members when we heard that a reporter from NPR would be there. Some of us waited for more than two hours across the street from the facility. Between the reporter being late and our busy schedules we did not see the reporter.

However a couple of the lawyers and social service people did come to speak to us about the conditions inside and what a typical day is like. The

families could use visitors from the outside world. We learned later that a "show" was put on for the reporter, organizing the women and children to participate in activities that they normally do not do.

From Jane Beck: "Protesting on both days were people of faith, acting on their Christian values, and passionate human rights activists. They believe there is a difference between refugees fleeing threats to their lives, and the term "Illegal immigrants" which is being applied to them. Legal technicalities shouldn't prevent Americans from acting on the fundamental values of human rights."

Please help support the families in their efforts to gain asylum by sending donations to Ann Bodnyk, RMM treasurer. Be sure to write on the memo line of your check or on a note with your check "Immigrant Detainees in Berks County". Make your check payable to RMM. These funds will be used to cover expenses such as fees for translators, travel costs or postage to obtain documents. Emotional support such as visits or yarn for craft projects would also be most helpful.

- from Janet Lamborn
Peace and Social Concerns Committee



Taking part in the May 8th Vigil at the Family Detention Center were Peter Frank, Janet Lamborn, Jane Beck, Jim Russo and Lee Pickett. Efforts to meet with an NPR reporter were not successful.

Later, an attorney reported to Carol Anne Donohoe "These (folks) staged a crazy scene for that reporter. She walked through the facility with an entourage of happy ICE employees and they staged a huge scene outside (during lunch and a school day, residents commented how weird it was) full of bicycling, street hockey, water, soccer and more.

Because of the protesters they forced all the women in to play an unplanned game of bingo, mid day, while they set up the "cones" and placed ICE staff around the perimeter.

The women didn't like that they were being used. They didn't like that their children were being used. I told them a reporter was there as soon as I got there, the response "no wonder they forced us to play bingo and took our kids out during lunch!"

Thank you The Berks Peace Community thanks Reading Monthly Meeting for allowing us to use your space for meeting for all these years and for your financial support.

- John Hoskyns-Abrahall

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Congratulations to Blair Seitz on the birth of his grandson, Laith Abu-Shreikh, born at Harrisburg Hospital, May 3, 2015, 7 lbs 13 ozs. He is healthy, though three weeks early. His mother is Charmaine Seitz and his father is Shihadeh Abu-Shreikh. He joins big brother, Ali, in their Harrisburg, PA home.

Hold in the Light Bob Drayer who has moved to Keystone Villa in Ephrata, PA (address posted), Charlie Gilbert, recovering from hip surgery, Matt Cinelli, recovering from hip surgery and Charles Gross, brother of David Gross, recovering from heart surgery.

Happy Birthday to Betty Lamborn (5/21), Nan Morrissey (6/3), Charlie Gilbert (6/8) and Cynthia Felter (6/16).

Support Your Membership Support your Meeting membership if you are able. Send your contribution to: Reading Monthly Meeting, c/o Ann Bodnyk, PO Box 148, Kutztown, PA 19530-0148.

Quaker Youth Work Camp Washington, D.C. 6/28-7/3/15

Young Friends from Lancaster Monthly Meeting invite you to come for a week-long work camp at

the William Penn House in Washington, DC this summer June 29th through July 3rd in the AM.

Our work camp will be focused on how community gardens can improve the lives of everyone in the community, but we will also be participating in riverbank cleanups, picnics, fellowship breakfasts and other projects of the William Penn House facilitators.

We will stay at William Penn House and cook our own dinners together. Lancaster Monthly Meeting will fund transportation and food. William Penn House will charge each participant approximately \$80 per day for lodging and breakfast.

For further information contact Beth Reeves at hernonreeves@hotmail.com or 717-295-3706 (or text at 717-468-3912). If you are interested in coming to the work camp, please call or email. Don't stay away for financial reasons; we can work together to raise the funds needed.



Heather Ehrlich, a member of RMM, chats with guests at the Berks Cultural Alliance Faith Festival, April 28, 2015.

- picture by Blair Seitz

Please join us for worship every Sunday: Opening Exercises, 10 AM, Meeting for Worship, 10:15 AM. First Day School begins at 10:30 AM. We are an unprogrammed meeting, a member of Caln Quarter and Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. For more information, call 610-372-5345 or visit 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 June newsletter to Bonnie Knutsen, bknutsen@ptd.net by June 7. Submit address, telephone or Email changes to Carl Knutsen at webagent@readingfriendsmeeting.org.

Clerk of Reading Meeting: Lee Pickett

Treasurer: Ann Bodnyk

Clerk of Trustees: Taylor Lamborn

Mailing Address: PO Box 148, Kutztown, PA 19530-0148

Clerk of Religious Education: Joe Morrissey

Clerk of Exeter Meeting: Paul Kerr