

BALTIMORE YEARLY MEETING (BYM) –

PEACE & SOCIAL CONCERNS

2021 newsletter – Spring Issue

If we desire a society in which men are brothers, then we must act towards one another with brotherhood. If we can build such a society, then we would have achieved the ultimate goal of human freedom..

~ Bayard Rustin, 1912-1987

BYM Interim meeting approves Peace & Immigration minutes:

On 3/6/21, BYM Interim Meeting approved two minutes, inviting local meetings also to support:

- 1) The newly-ratified [U.N. Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons](#): The treaty, initiated in 2017, finally became effective on 1/22/2021 with its ratification by more than 50 nations. However, neither the U.S. nor any other nuclear-armed power as yet has ratified it. Local meetings are invited to join BYM in asking U.S. adoption of the treaty by correspondence to your members of the U.S. Congress in the House of Representatives and Senate to encourage their support.
- 2) The Quaker Statement on Migration, developed by 5 Quaker organizations FCNL, AFSC, QUNO/Quaker United Nations Office, Quaker Council for European Affairs & Britain YM), states-

“Friends are committed to working for a world where dignity and rights are upheld regardless of migration status and not on the basis of citizenship or perceived deservedness.

“Migration is a fundamental facet of human behavior. The line between chosen and forced migration is frequently blurred by factors including insecurity, desperation, the search for dignity, and the climate crisis.”

Reasons for migrating are often exacerbated by inequalities, structures of domination that include colonialism, racism, sexism and classism. The

connection is made between immigration, racial and climate injustice.

This Statement on Migration calls for the immediate end to unjust migration management systems. In the US, those include I.C.E./Immigration & Customs Enforcement, CBP/Customs and Border Protection and the Detention System.

This statement is a container for the work that needs to be done such as:

- Provide a roadmap to citizenship for the over 11 million undocumented people living in the US
- Pass a Dream and Promise Act - to preserve and expand DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals)
- Increase the number of refugees to be resettled annually to 125,000.
- Stop construction of a border wall.

Local meetings are invited to join BYM with support of this statement and with letters to the Biden Administration and to our representatives in Congress to pursue U.S. adoption of these goals.

COVID-ALTERNATIVES FOR BYM’S NETWORKING DAY

Our 2020 BYM Networking Day was canceled this year, due to COVID concerns. But, in lieu of this, our BYM Peace & Social Concerns Committee has Zoom alternatives that follow in this e-newsletter!

Do you have suggestions for some other Zoom workshops or discussions on Quaker concerns? Please send your ideas via email to peace@bym-rsf.org.

POSSIBLE ZOOM WORKSHOPS for Peace & Social Concerns issues:

1) Conscientious objector workshops for BYM youth?

Now that Selective Service System (SSS) registration for the draft in most states is automatic when getting a state driver’s license, Quaker youth and other youth of faith can easily miss the chance to claim status as a conscientious objector (CO). If the draft is reinstated, they could have as

little as nine days to prepare a CO claim before having to go before a local draft board.

If your meeting has youth ages 15-18 who might want to claim conscientious objector status, please email pcaroom@gmail.com for more information.

- 2) **The 5th Annual Youth Peace Conference for Maryland** has been organized by students in the area of Howard Co., Md., with assistance of the Sandy Springs MM Peace Committee.

This year's event will be held virtually on Saturday, 4/10/21, 9:15 a.m.-4:30 p.m. There is no charge to attend. For more information and to register, see <https://www.youthpeaceconferencemd.org>

Any young Friends, grades 8-12, living in Maryland and the D.C. metro area are welcome to attend.

The 2021 theme "Resistance and Radical Reform" is most pressing and relevant now more than ever, as youth are coming together across the world to organize in support of causes and movements such as the Black Lives Matter movement and the fight for environmental awareness, among many others. Youth are demanding that broken, oppressive systems be rebuilt and reformed.

At the 2021 Youth Peace Conference, students will gain resources on how to peacefully organize, resist injustice, and create change within their communities.

- 3) **How might you or your local meeting support reparations for African-Americans and indigenous people?**

African-American households, on average, hold only about 10% of the assets of comparable white American households. The poverty rate among indigenous people in the

U.S. is even worse. How can we begin to undo the 400 years of socio-economic harm?

BYM's Reparations Action Working Group will sponsor three workshops -- 1) the first at Annual Sessions to be headlined by a panel of African-American and indigenous leaders, who will discuss how Quakers might support the reparations movement. Friends will be invited to ask questions and to have their own discussions.

Two more workshops after Annual Session will invite Friends 2) to hear what other local meetings have begun to do about our reparations concern and 3) to share visions about what BYM's collective reparations efforts might look like 10 years in the future!

- 4) FMW Peace and Social Concerns Committee's workshop is pending this coming weekend:

"Roots of Injustice, Seeds of Change: Toward Right Relationship with Native Peoples" - Sunday, March 21, 12:30 to 2:30 pm via Zoom

The workshop is free and open to all people in the DC metro area, but can only accommodate up to 60 participants.

[REGISTER HERE.](#)

WORKSHOP DESCRIPTION: The workshop is designed and led by members of the Friends Peace Teams' Toward Right Relationship workgroup and is appropriate for high school students and adults. In this 2-hour participatory workshop, up to 60 participants will get to hear the story of the colonization of this land in the words of Indigenous leaders, Euro-American leaders, and Western historians. We will take part in the story through experiential exercises, and share our responses and reflections in small groups. Together, we will also explore steps that non-Native people can take to build relationships with Native peoples today based on truth, respect, and justice. (Please be prepared to take part the whole time, sitting in a quiet place, and with your camera on, as a way to make the

learning community more personal.) [Register here for the March 21 workshop](#) and, for more information, please see the Toward Right Relationship workgroup's [website](#).

WORKSHOP FACILITATORS:

Jerilyn DeCoteau is an enrolled member of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians in North Dakota and is a founding member and co-coordinator of [Right Relationship Boulder](#), and she was instrumental in establishing Boulder's Indigenous Peoples Day. She currently serves as Chief Justice for the Pueblo of San Ildefonso Supreme Court. She does consulting on issues of tribal governance, capacity building, and the legacy of the Indian boarding schools. **Andy Grant** lives in a cohousing community in western Massachusetts. A Quaker, he is addressing — with his monthly and yearly meetings — concerns about right relationship with Indigenous people. Professionally, Andy is a practitioner with Sociocracy For All, offering accessible training and implementation support for self-organizing groups using consent-based decision making ([so4all.org](#)).

WORKSHOP ZOOM TECH TEAM:

Kevin Abourezk serves as managing editor for Indianz.com, a Native American news website. He has spent 21 years as a professional journalist, including 18 years as a reporter and editor for the *Lincoln Journal Star*. He is an enrolled citizen of the Rosebud Sioux Tribe and a married father of five children. He lives and works in Lincoln, Nebraska. Indianz.com is owned and operated by Ho-Chunk Inc., the economic development corporation for

the Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska. **Annette Brickley** is a science education consultant living in Mattapoisett, MA (territory of the Wampanoag nation).

RECENT RESPONSES FROM NON-NATIVE WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

"The thoughtful way that you presented this information made it so much more powerful."

"Wow - that was an excellent workshop. Best zoom educational experience I have had!"

"I've known and thought about indigenous peoples' history for a long time. Now what I can do is much more in the forefront of my mind."

"This is a wonderful model for fostering conversations that lead to more understanding among peoples."

RECENT RESPONSES FROM NATIVE WORKSHOPS PARTICIPANTS

"Everything that went into this experience and the presentation is so deeply meaningful."

"This workshop is the tool I've been searching for to begin imagining a new way forward."

FMW's PEACE AND SOCIAL CONCERNS COMMITTEE LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We acknowledge with humility, that the land where our Meeting House sits, and where we worship together, borders the territory of the Nacotchtank (na-COTCH-tank) (<https://www.pronouncekiwi.com/Nacotchtank>) people, for whom the Anacostia River is named. The Nacotchtank lived in a thriving, fortified settlement, based on agriculture, hunting, and trade. As white colonists moved in, bringing with them violence and European diseases, the

Nacotchtank people moved briefly to Anacostine Island, which is now Theodore Roosevelt Island. As conditions worsened, many Nacotchtank people ended up in Canada, but some moved and remained in Maryland as part of the Piscataway Indian Tribe.

[REGISTER HERE](#) Please let me know if you have any questions about this workshop

For more information, contact:

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FCNL ON THE IRAN NUCLEAR DEAL:

The Iran Nuclear Deal was a signature achievement of the Obama administration. Trump withdrew from the deal, despite its remarkable success, and then initiated a “maximum pressure campaign,” including sanctions that led to the contraction of Iran’s economy by 12% and great suffering by the people of Iran.

President Biden has indicated his intention to reenter the deal, but he is facing tremendous pressure from hard liners in the U.S. not to do so unless the terms of the deal are greatly expanded—a gambit designed to kill the deal.

Some members of Congress are urging Biden not to reenter the deal, as is—a recipe for war. [Contact your members of Congress](#) and ask them to support Pres. Biden’s reentry into the deal, with no preconditions and with the removal of all Trump-era sanctions. The world does not need another war.

Quaker Voice of Maryland makes progress in 2021:

At BYM 2019 Interim Meeting, Friends agreed that our Peace & Social Concerns Committee should support a new working group to form a Friends Committee on STATE Legislation” for Maryland --not just limited to BYM, but inviting participation of Eastern Shore meetings that officially belong to Philadelphia Yearly Meeting.

[Quaker Voice of Maryland \(QVM\) now has its own webpage](#) (click here!), thanks to young Friend Molly Finch, and is increasingly active in its second Maryland General Assembly Session.

After a well-attended Maryland Friends’ Zoom meeting in June and a statewide survey this fall, QVM selected four main issue areas for 2021 action. These include:

- Criminal Justice and Law Enforcement Reform
- Climate Justice
- Expanding Access to Health Care
- Gun Violence Prevention and Peace Building

Already, some QVM priority bills have found success in the Md. General Assembly, but there is lots more to do in the last month of Maryland’s 90 day annual Session. Please click above and sign up to receive a newsletter and action alerts !

BYM Friends from D.C., Virginia, West Virginia, and Pennsylvania feeling left out?

If you want support for similar organizing in your area, let your BYM Peace and Social Concerns Committee know by emailing: peace@bym-rsf.org.

YOU CAN SHARE YOUR LOCAL MEETING’S PROGRAMS OR INFORMATION WITH OTHERS AROUND

BALTIMORE YEARLY MEETING: Please email to pcaroom@gmail.com, &/or visit our Face Book page at <https://www.facebook.com/bym.pscc/>