

Friends Meeting of Washington
Order of Worship
Monthly Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business
February 9, 2025

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Meeting began 12:25 pm with 36 Friends present.

First Time Attendees: Ramon Ryan, Alexandra Mitjans, Katie Emil, Mack Bramon-Yonker.

Testimony: We are a people that follow after those things that make for peace, love and unity; it is our desire that others' feet may walk in the same, and do deny and bear our testimony against all strife, and wars, and contentions that come from the lusts that war in the member, that war in the soul, which we wait for, and watch for in all people, and love and desire the good of all... Treason, treachery, and false dealing we do utterly deny; false dealing, surmising, or plotting against any creature upon the face of the earth, and speak the truth in plainness, and singleness of heart. – *Margaret Fell, 1660*

Query for Worship Sharing: How do we realize this testimony in this time?

Friends spoke of how we handle conflict within our own Meeting, and how we treat those with whom we are in conflict. How can we work in common, and in truth, and with love?

Clerk's Report, February 2025

In Memoriam

- Paul Bickart, Husband of Marcia Reecer

Upcoming Events

- **Worship Sharing for those impacted by actions of the current Administration, Quaker House and online, Thursday, Feb. 13, 7:00 pm.** [Join on Zoom](#). In these times of confusion and upheaval, Friends may feel fear, sorrow, pain and anger. Let us look to Spirit and our

community for strength and guidance. Hosted by FMW's Anti-Racism Friendships Group. For more information, contact Debby Churchman (DChurchm@yahoo.com)

- **Universal Basic Income panel, Decatur Place Room, February 16, 2025**
Panel discussion with economic thought leaders on **universal basic income policies**, innovative, practical, anti-poverty measures that can be adopted by local, state, or national governments: What they are, where they have been tried, how they have worked, and how we can afford them. Organized and moderated by committee member Peter Nye, the panel will offer a chance to explore this. For more information, contact Peter Nye at peterwesleynye@gmail.com.
- **FCNL: Urgent Advocacy for Migration Rights, Online, Wednesday, Feb 19, 6:30 pm**
This [*Quaker Changemaker Event*](#) with FCNL's Anika Forrest, Linnea Halsten, and Alicia McBridewill focus on urgent advocacy for migration rights. As immigrants face unprecedented threats, we will reflect on how we can live on the call to love our neighbors without exception, drawing on a long tradition of Quakers taking a stand for migrant's rights. [Join us](#) as we make our voices heard.
- **Washington Interfaith Network action meeting, Holy Redeemer, Feb 25, 6:30-8:00 pm,**
Our affiliation with WIN offers an important opportunity to advocate for affordable green housing, jobs, safety and equity for all DC residents. WIN's large "Action Team" meetings are a great way to plug into WIN's campaigns and meet people from congregations all across the District. This one will include a Fiscal Policy Institute presentation on the DC's budget. [Details and sign-up](#). For more info, contact Barbara Briggs (BarbaraHBriggs@gmail.com)
- **White Privilege Conference in Hartford, CT | March 26-29 - *Quaker discount available***
This conference will bring together students, teachers, university faculty, social workers, non-profit staff, activists, healthcare workers, and others to discuss how white privilege, white supremacy and oppression affect daily life, and to build strategies to address issues of privilege and oppression, and to advance social and economic justice. Friends General Conference offers a substantial discount ([Register here through FGC](#) for discount code.) For more info, here's the [conference website](#).
- **Pendle Hill: Primitive Quakerism Revived – Returning to Friends' Roots as a Radically Transformative Prophetic Movement | Tuesdays, April 1-29**
Weekly seminar with Peter Blood (Hybrid). [Details and rates](#).

FMW Community Highlights & Kudos

- On February 4, The **Washington Post** published a [letter to the editor](#) by co-clerk Elaine Wilson and Peace & Social Concerns co-clerk Steve Chase in support of the [Quaker suit](#) opposing Homeland Security's new order to permit ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) raids on houses of worship.
- **Quaking Quakers** will be pouring buckets of ice water over themselves next Saturday to raise money for the Chesapeake Action Network

Tenant Updates- Activities at our Meeting House

- In January, FMW hosted numerous team retreats and conferences, including the winter roundtable for Destination DC's Sustainability District, of which FMW is a member, and where FMW rentals director Brian Lutenegeger was asked to present on the sustainability features of our campus and practices. [Event Rental Report - January 2025](#)

Business

Reminder from the clerks: We are in a Meeting for Worship (with concern for business)

- That we will ask each individual to speak only once to an issue,
- Be succinct and speak simply without jargon,
- Please hold your thoughts carefully and wait til you have heard what others have to say—to ask yourself whether in the light of what they have shared, whether you need to share as well OR perhaps you can see the issue in a new light.
- Ask yourself whether or not what you have to say is truly coming from the divine spirit.
- Decisions in the Meeting are made by Members of the Meeting.
- If you feel that you are not in unity with the “sense of the Meeting,” ask yourself if you can stand aside to allow the group to move forward.

Membership - Rebecca Nelson

- Amanda Wernicke—second presentation. She is grateful for being in a community of hearing people who welcome her hearing challenged child, Lizzie. **Friends approved.**
- Lizzie Dunbar Wernicke— associate member - **Friends approved.**
- Daniel Jasper—second presentation - **Friends approved.**
- Andrew Ross—first presentation - We are grateful for his deeply thoughtful messages and insights. He loves all aspects of Quaker worship. This application lays over for one month, as is our custom.
- EJ Hardwick—first presentation - Grateful for his grounding in the faith, after a deep spiritual search. He is a gift to this community. He attends worship with friends at American University. This application lays over for one month, as is our custom.
- Daniel Erichson-Teale—first presentation He found comfort in being at Meeting with us. He is open, curious and big hearted. This application lays over for one month, as is our custom.

Membership Committee Annual report—Report is included in Addenda below. Main work of the committee is connecting with and encouraging membership for those who are ready. Did an annual mailing to Friends to encourage active engagement in the community, and to check in with all members.

A Friend asked how members of the community can support their work?

The committee needs more members to serve on clearness committees, but not necessarily join the membership committee.

Friends **accepted** the report.

Trans Kids and their parents–Allen or Elaine

Clerks would like to create a file of info and resources available to help parents to support their trans children. Not online. Particularly looking for organizations that provide health care for such children. Please contact Clerks if you have resources to add, or would like access to the information.

A Friend asked if this is just for Trans kids or for Trans people in general? It may expand to include all Trans people, but we are currently focused on children because of the restrictions that are being placed on such.

A Friend said there are already organizations doing this work, and we need to find them and help to provide info about them to parents.

Another Friend said it might be good to discern the Meeting's stance on various health care approaches for trans people, especially children.

Personal Aid clerk affirms that Personal Aid is available for trans people and families with trans people.

A Friend says that BYM has a Transgender Working Group and has access to resources. Transgender Equality and Whitman Walker also has numerous resources.

Library Clerk points out that we have several books on this topic, especially geared toward parents. They welcome book suggestions.

Library Records & Handbook - annual report - Gene Throwe

Report is included in Addenda below. Highlights include that the committee is almost done updating the Handbook, while awaiting 3 more committee updates. Nicholas Sayler has joined as co-historian. Starting to plan our 100 year anniversary in 2031. Almost finished modernizing the collection. Trying to do additional workdays; all are welcome. They will provide training on how to use the more modern checkout process. Suggestions for new books are welcome. We would like folks to bring books back, please. Committee needs more members.

A Friend thanks the Clerk for his tireless work on behalf of this committee in holding book sales. They made more than \$450 at the last one.

The Meeting **accepted** the report.

Library Records & Handbook - handbook changes - Gene Throwe

Summary of Changes to Friends Meeting of Washington [Handbook-February 2025](#) All of these come from the Mary Jane Simpson Scholarship Fund.

- 1.) Section 9 Special Committees – Changed Mary Jane Simpson Scholarship Fund to an indefinite number of members, self-appointing, and serving as long as necessary.
- 2.) Section 9.4 Mary Jane Simpson Scholarship Fund – Added Bethesda and Langley Hill Friends as participants. Charges all three Meetings to fundraise for the Fund.

- 3.) Section 12.1 Business Meeting Agenda – Moves Mary Jane Simpson Scholarship Fund annual report from September to October. The move to October allows for updates on new awardees and disbursements over the past year.

The Nominating Committee is concerned by a number of working groups and taskforces that are not under the care of a Committee which may be using Meeting resources. Nominating doesn't nominate members to a few of these. The current clerk of Mary Jane Simpson, Indira Martell, is a member of Bethesda Meeting. This scholarship fund is unique in as much as it is run by 3 different Friends Meetings. The clerk of F&S clarified that we give about \$5000 a year; Bethesda gives \$35,000. Hunger and Homelessness Task Force under P&SC are both listed as separate line items in our budget.

Friends **approved** these handbook changes.

Ministry & Worship: Spiritual State of the Meeting - Kathy Powell

Each year, M&W asks all members and attenders how Spirit prospers among us. We have a survey on the listservs and plans to reach out to committees and groups.

Nominating Committee - Committee nominations - Michael Beer

all terms 3 years ending December 2027

Roger Catlin	–Hospitality Committee - Friends approved
Chuck Mayer	–Finance and Stewardship - Friends approved
Ramon Ryan	–Finance and Stewardship - Friends approved
James Sanders	–Finance and Stewardship - Friends approved
Michael Wood	–Property Committee & co-clerk of Property - Friends approved
Claire Schnatterbeck	–Peace and Social Concerns - Friends approved
Basil Kiwan	–Marriage and Family Relations <i>and</i> clerk of M&FR - Friends approved
Anne Kendall	–Marriage and Family Relations - Friends approved
Ed Hustead	–Personnel Committee (2nd 3-year term) - Friends approved

Resignations:

Raymond Patch	–Ministry and Worship - Friends accept
Viticia Thames	–Ministry and Worship - Friends accept

Nominating looking for more Friends to serve on various committees

Anti-racism Support Group – DEIA Minute

[Minute in Support of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility](#) linked and in addenda.–Debby Churchman

-The Anti Racism Support Group worked last week to create this minute.

- As members of the Religious Society of Friends, we hold to the testimony of equality, which states that God exists in all persons. We see this tenet even in our most fundamental document of the American way of life, the Constitution.
- The minute affirms that Quakers have long stood alongside the civil rights efforts of women, people of color, and LGBTQ communities, and call on all people to follow our Founder's call to uphold the Constitutional aspiration of equality.
- For context, The Anti-racism support group was requested to draft this message not to prioritize the voice of one social concern, but rather to make the claim known.
- A request was made to remove mention of the Founder's intentions in their call towards equality for all, when the Founders of America and their constitutional documents were not made in support of all peoples, specifically Black enslaved people who were considered lesser to white citizens.
- Suggested amendment to the text: that we "honor the American value of equality" rather than centering the Founder's intentions.
- A request was made to spell out the identities of the LGBTQIA abbreviation, as the intention of this message is to center the humanity of the underprivileged communities in question.
- Another request was "we see this.." (request quote from Barbara). speaking more to the spirit of the Consitution's call for equality, and not how the document was interpreted and applied in its time.
- Friend spoke about the context of this minute, namely that FMW's message will be speaking into a conflict zone. DE&I is a politically contentious topic at this time, so the friend urges those in attendance today to be wary of how the words may be misinterpreted by those on various points of the spectrum of this discourse. Rather than reiterate the triggering language, such as DE&I, friend proposes that we explain where these ideas come from. Request was made to remove "The" in "the Testimony of Equality"
- Friend mentioned that they are uncomfortable with the way violence against the LGBTQIA, specifically the trans community, is specifically centered, specifically because of the persistent and ongoing ways in which other marginalized communities have experienced oppression over time. Another friend spoke of their own experience and the specific violence perpetrated on those in the LGBTQIA community.
- A Friend spoke of taking time to maintain our spiritual integrity as a Quaker community when choosing our words surrounding this letter. We have a moral authority as Quakers that not all religious communities seem to uphold.
- A Friend spoke out that the violence against these communities is very real and currently happening, and there is an urgency that must be met as it stands entirely against our commitment to peace.
- Request was made to move forward with the edits made today and approve the message, with the understanding that the comments made here can be incorporated.
- A Friend suggested reframing the intent of the message to center on Quakers' long held beliefs as against the current messaging of the American Government, rather than being a reactive statement to the current state of events.

The meeting **approved** the minute, with understanding that the drafters will quickly incorporate the amendments suggested today.

Update 2/12: A small group meeting was held on February 10th to finalize the requested edits. The Finalized DEIA Minute is viewable [here](#) and in Addenda, below.

Peace and Social Concerns—annual report (In addenda) -CJ Pfutzner

-Healthy Homes Act

-Annual Climate work through Chesapeake Climate Fund

-Reports investment in time and effort to the conflict in Palestinian, such as funding a trip to the Palestinian Museum, hosting Palestinian author Laila el-Haddad, and other events and efforts listed in the attached addendum.

-Successfully hosted a de-escalation training

-Acted as conduit with Washington Interfaith Network (WIN), including fundraising efforts to this organization

-Signed onto the Apartheid-Free Communities Pledge

-Participating in the Quaker Call for Action workshops and dialogues, an organization of Quakers working primarily to protect democratic processes and voting rights in anticipation of the 2024 elections.

-Raised \$26,000 for the 10 February 2024 Polar Plunge; \$13,000 of that went to P&SC's Social Justice Fund.

-Question was raised concerning the AVP (Alternative to Violence Project); the project is ongoing, but the P&SC is not currently working with them.

-Question was raised regarding work with indigenous peoples, which was not centered in the report. There were no specific events this year regarding indigenous peoples although there were events in 2023.

Friends **accepted** the report.

March: Personal Aid

April: Property, F&S/Anita-info into budget process, (Anti-racist query), SSoM

ADDENDA: ATTACHED COMMITTEE REPORTS

LIBRARY, RECORDS, AND HANDBOOK COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT - SECOND MONTH (February) 2025

What we've done this year-The Library, Records, and Handbook last submitted a report in February 2023. This report will cover the last 2 years.

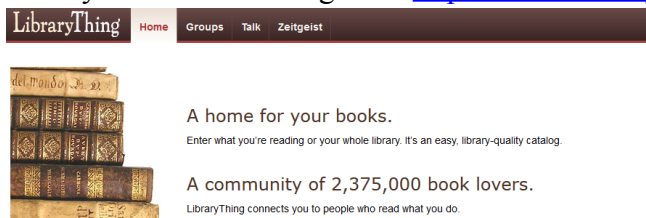
Starting in 2021, all committees were sent their sections of the handbook to make edits. We have completed all edits except three outstanding committees and one committee submitted edits for this month for approval. A reminder will be sent this month to the last three committees.

With the passing of Hayden Wetzel, one new Historian, Nicholas Saylor, was appointed to replace him and join Greg Robb. The Historians and other volunteers are going through the archives, especially the boxes of records from Swarthmore College Friends Historical Library that Hayden was not able to file before he died. They are also planning the 100th anniversary history of Friends Meeting of Washington in 2031 and hope to have more than just a history book. If Friends have suggestions, please contact them.

Due to Friends Meeting of Washington's budget concerns, the Library, Records, and Handbook Committee raises its own funds to buy books, supplies, and subscriptions. The Dupont Little Flea Market at 19th and Q Streets NW on Sundays from 9 am to 3 pm has graciously donated space for the Committee to conduct a book sale thrice so far and welcomes the Committee to continue to do so twice a year in the spring and autumn. We continue to hold book sales at the Meetinghouse to raise money for the Committee.

Starting in mid-2021, the Committee started to work on adding new books to the collection from donations from the book sale. We also realized this was a good time to resuscitate the goals from 2020. Since 2022, the Committee has met regularly for work days about once a month to go through each shelf and decide if books in the collection still belong in the library, and if damaged, are they worth replacing. Also, the Committee is committed to updating all library call numbers using only one system. In the 90+ years, each Librarian used a different version of the Dewey Decimal system. Doing this updating will simplify the system and help us discover duplicates with different call numbers. Yes, this has happened more than once. The Committee is about 85% complete in this project and hopes to be done by June 2025. This will include relabeling the shelves to assist Friends to find books.

How to use the Library-To locate a book in the Library, first find the library website by going to <https://www.quakersdc.org/library-records-and-handbook-committee>. The books in the Library have been cataloged on <http://www.LibraryThing.com>.



The FMW Library catalog is viewable at <http://www.librarything.com/catalog/FMWLibrary> or on mobile devices at <http://www.librarything.com/m/> by entering the collection name FMWLibrary.

You can locate books by author, or subject, or title. To find where the book you want is located, find the call number under the Comments section. If necessary, ask Library Committee members for help. If you can't find the book you want on the shelf, check the notebook to see if someone else has it out.

We continue our new system for checkout, using a notebook for signing out. We trust you to return them, and cross out your entry. Try to return books within a month so that others may use them too. We ask all Friends to return borrowed books because we have several outstanding books dating back to 2017.

About the Collection-As of Second Month (February) 2, 2025, the Library held 2,590 books in the collection, an increase of 60 volumes since 2023. Additions to the collection came partly from donations and new books purchased by the Committee. We gladly welcome suggestions from the community and look for new titles relating to Quakerism to add to the collection.

Before donating books, please talk to Committee members. The Library's scope for collecting includes Quaker history and biography, spirituality, LGBTQA+ spirituality, mysticism, social justice, and non-violence.

The Library has added more links to electronic versions of classic Quaker titles to the Library's homepage, including John Woolman's *Journal*, Robert Barclay's *Apology*, and *Journal of the Life and Religious Labours of Elias Hicks*. We have included a basic introduction to Quakerism website, and a link to another Quaker library which has even more material. If people need assistance downloading these to their own Kindles or other e-book readers, please contact Library Committee members

The Committee Goals-As we continue to plan for 2025 and beyond, the Committee will finish updating the collection, finish the Handbook, and create better signage. We meet the first First Day (Sunday) at 12:15 pm. This allows at least one First Day in which the Committee can assist patrons in the Library as we do our work. Please interrupt our committee meetings or ask any Committee member for assistance during fellowship!

We could always use assistance and actively welcome new members. If you have an interest, please approach one of the committee members. You do not need to be a librarian, archivist, or historian to be a valuable member of our Committee; you just need to love books and history!

Members of the Library, Records, and Handbook Committee:

Gene Throwe, Clerk and Librarian, Greg Robb, Historian; Nicholas Saylor, Historian; Kylie Carpenter; Helena Cobban; William Hardy; Savannah Richie; Patrick Turley; Faith Williams (emeritus)

2024 MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

This year, the Membership Committee welcomed two new members and is in the process of working with eight additional applicants. While this is a smaller number than last year, we feel confident that we're making Friends appropriately aware that membership is an option for them, and that we're planting seeds for future membership applications. We processed three transfers from other Meetings, and one transfer to another Meeting. We also had two resignations from Friends whose spiritual condition no longer aligns with Friends Meeting of Washington, Joe D'Antonio and Marianne Rossert.

New members welcomed:

- Malcolm McDermond
- Samaa Eldadah
- Amanda Wernicke and Lizzie Dunbar Wernicke (associate member) (at second presentation)
- Daniel Jasper (at second presentation)
- EJ Hardwick (at first presentation)
- Andrew Ross (at first presentation)
- Daniel Erichsen-Teal (at first presentation)
- Alexandra Mitjans and Olmo Rengife (associate member) (clearness committee assigned)

Transfers processed:

- Charles Mayer from Scarsdale Friends Meeting
- Diane Randall from Hartford Monthly Meeting
- Roger Catlin from Hartford Monthly Meeting
- Jose (Woss) Moreno to Homewood Friends Meeting

After years of faithful service, Beth Cogswell resigned from Membership Committee to focus on other spiritual leadings. We welcomed Arne Nelson in 2025.

Membership Committee is going strong, with regular attendance; active contribution from all committee members from their various strength areas; and a productive, collaborative way of working together. At each of our meetings we check in with each other, address new and ongoing membership processes, and seek to advance on at least one additional matter. Some of the areas we advanced in 2024 include the following:

- We held a New Member Welcome event on Sunday, June 2 with a cake and excerpts from new members' letters as well as short introductory speeches from transfers. We've gotten good feedback on the practice of sharing Friends' words at these events.
- Committee members reached out personally to recent participants in the Quakerism 101 class to share more information about membership, generating some interest from additional community members in pursuing membership.
- We received permission from members to share their letters on our website as examples of how one could write a membership letter.
- We've been planning an annual mailing to Members to encourage them to stay active in the Meeting in ways that feed their spiritual development, express our appreciation for their presence in our community, open the door to ways Membership Committee could better serve them, and ask people to let us know if they've unofficially left the Meeting or if their info in FMW's directory is incorrect.

We are always grateful to have the privilege of speaking with Friends about their spiritual journeys at a joyful moment when they are reaching clarity about their beliefs and their sense of belonging in our community, and of celebrating and caring for our Members over the course of their time with FMW.

In the Light,
Mary Melchior
Arne Nelson
Rebecca Nelson, Clerk
Elaine Wilson
Chris Zubowicz

Draft Minute in Support of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility

Brought by FMW Anti-Racism Support Group

As members of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), we hold firmly to the Testimony of Equality, which is the knowledge that there is that of God in every person. This truth calls us to honor the inherent dignity and worth of all individuals, knowing that when we face any individual, we are looking into the face of God.

We see this belief in equality reflected in the founding documents of the United States including the Declaration of Independence, which proclaims that all are created equal and endowed with unalienable rights such as life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Yet, we are deeply troubled by recent executive orders that undermine diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts—orders that deny the fundamental equality we as a nation and a faith are called to uphold.

Friends have long worked for justice, from opposing slavery to advocating for women’s rights and civil rights. We feel compelled to speak out against actions that perpetuate inequality. To remain silent would be to turn away from our shared responsibility to build a society where all can thrive.

In a distortion of the truth, the orders call out policies and programs meant to address historical racial, gender, and other injustices as “discriminatory.” The erasure of LGBTQ rights, including transgender identity, is especially inhumane.¹

We call on all people, and especially government legislators and administrators, to honor the Founders’ call for equality for all people, regardless of their background, gender, immigration status, citizenship status, physical and/or mental abilities, cultural or racial identity, or beliefs

¹ For example, government websites are being purged of mention of anything related to gender identity or gender diversity. Funding of grants for domestic and international programs, data collection, conferences, and other activities related to sexual or gender minorities has been abruptly halted. The State Department has removed the term “transgender” in LGBT to reference “LGB” travel information. Databases from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to the Census Bureau that contain transgender information are being taken down. The abrupt termination of funding for international programs for transgender people is putting them at physical risk and cutting off vital health services. Trans people—especially the incarcerated and the young—are being deprived of vital medical care.

Minute in Support of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility

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We see the belief in equality reflected aspirationally in founding documents of the United States, including the Declaration of Independence, which proclaimed that all men are created equal and endowed with unalienable rights such as life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. We are deeply troubled by recent Presidential Actions that deny the fundamental equality we as a nation and a faith are called to uphold.

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In a distortion of the truth, the orders call out policies and programs meant to address historical racial, gender, and other injustices as "discriminatory." The erasure of Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender/Queer+ rights, including transgender identity, is especially inhumane.

We call on all people, and especially government legislators and administrators, to honor the American belief in equality for all people, regardless of their background, gender, immigration status, citizenship status, physical or mental abilities, cultural or racial identity, or beliefs.

FMW Committee on Peace & Social Concerns Annual Report

January 2024 - December 2024

Introduction

Friends Meeting Washington's Peace and Social Concerns (P&SC) committee spent 2024 supporting the social justice work of our Meeting, its members, and attenders. We worked together on events, grants, and advocacy for a number of social justice issues that the FMW community felt moved to act on. Additionally, we connected with outside groups to further the scope and reach of our work.

This year our Committee members were: Barbara Briggs (clerk), Rozella Apel-Hernandez, Steve Chase, Tamina Chowdhury, Kristen Clark, Allie Douma, Marina Jacobo, Jake Karaisz, Peter Nye, and Helen Qubain. Although we had ten official members of our committee, other attendees contributed, planned, worshiped, and collaborated with us to make this year's work effective and meaningful. This report is divided into sections for ease of reading; [Issues Addressed](#), [Finances](#), and [Looking Ahead](#). There is slight overlap with the previous report of events that took place in January, but are included here for consistency and readability.

Issues Addressed

Environment

Moving DC Off Fossil Fuels: Healthy Homes Act

FMW's Peace and Social Concerns Committee has played a strong supportive role in the work of the Beyond Gas Coalition, including in pressing for the passage of the Healthy Homes Omnibus Amendment Act, which DC Council passed unanimously on 7 May 2024. The new law creates a program that will help 30,000 low-income and moderate income households to transition from burning gas to highly efficient, non-polluting electric appliances for home heating and cooking. P&SC's role included activism, education, citizen science, and active participation in the democratic process alongside [Washington Interfaith Network](#), Interfaith Power and Light, and Sierra Club's DC chapter, which together form the [Beyond Gas DC](#) coalition, whose mission is to move the District off fossil fuels in a way that is equitable and immediately beneficial for DC's low income residents.

The passage of this act is an important step in the process of making DC more sustainable, just, and healthy. It is worth noting that there are more hurdles before the act is truly enforced, including ensuring its budget is sufficient for the task. In 2024, DC Mayor Muriel Bowser's administration re-allocated the funds promised in the Healthy Homes Act. Through strong

advocacy, Beyond Gas was able to convince Council to create a new revenue stream to make up for most of what was taken. But it is likely to be a fight again this year. P&SC and Beyond Gas continue to spread awareness and advocate for funds to be used to support getting DC off of its natural gas dependency (see [letter](#) dated 29 April 2024 to Councilperson Allen).

Chesapeake Climate Action Network

In 2024, as for the last several years, P&SC supported the excellent regional climate work of the Chesapeake Climate Action Network (CCAN) through participation in their biggest annual fundraiser, the Polar Bear Plunge.

Peace

Palestine

The conflict in Israel, Palestine, and the surrounding nations has been a matter of ongoing concern. A minute drafted by P&SC was discussed over several FMW-wide meetings and FMW approved the [“Seeking a Just Peace in Israel/Palestine” Minute](#) on 21 July 2024. This minute was structured and sponsored by P&SC. A second minute, regarding US support for genocide, has been drafted and presented to the Meeting this year.

P&SC, with the leadership of Jake Karaisz, organized an April visit to the local Museum of the Palestinian People for FMW attenders and friends. Steve Chase, who has devoted a significant amount of his time visiting Israel and Palestine, teaches folks both within and outside of FWM about the dynamics there through [lectures](#) and writing.

Multiple vigils and protests were attended by P&SC members, specifically carrying the Quakers banner.

FMW, under the care of P&SC, hosted Palestinian author Laila el-Haddad in January for a [dialogue](#) and hosted General Secretary of the American Friends Service Committee Joyce Ajlouny on 5 June 2024. This event was co-sponsored by Sandy Spring Meeting. On 1 December 2024, P&SC and Library Committee co-sponsored an event with member and author Helena Cobban titled “Understanding Palestinian Resistance from the PLO to Hamas.”

P&SC endorsed the Friend’s Committee on National Legislation letter titled, [“A Different Future is Possible: Shared Quaker Vision for Peace in Israel and Palestine”](#) and brought it before Meeting for Business in September, where it was passed.

Faith-based & Local Peace Activism

P&SC partnered with Nonviolence International to host Palestinian Christian peace advocate Amira Musallam and Nonviolent Peaceforce co-founder Mel Duncan for an event 16 October titled, “Voices from the West Bank: Stories of Resistance and Protection.”

In April, P&SC responded to the [Friends Committee on National Legislation](#) (FCNL) call for Meetings’ priorities. P&SC organized FMW-wide dialogues for attendees to voice what issues mattered to them, and P&SC compiled those sentiments into a brief statement, which was

submitted directly to FCNL for consideration in their efforts to communicate with the 119th Congress.

Attempts to get an organized effort from FMW members to assist FCNL in their efforts has been brought before P&SC multiple times this year, especially with a focus on peace in Israel and Palestine. Due to time and personnel limitations, this effort has not been organized yet.

P&SC agreed to sponsor a de-escalation training, hosted by Ken Forsberg, which will take place in 2025.

Equity, Racial Justice, and Poverty

Washington Interfaith Network (WIN)

Peace and Social Concerns has made it a priority to support the work of the Washington Interfaith Network, which FMW joined in 2020, encouraging FMW community participation in WIN organizing and advocacy efforts. [WIN](#) is “a broad-based, multi-racial, multi-faith, strictly non-partisan, District-wide citizens’ power organization rooted in local congregations and associations.” P&SC raises the funds to cover our Meetings dues to WIN as part of our support for this mission (see [Grants Awarded](#)) and worked significantly on their Green Healthy Housing campaign (see [Climate](#)), spearheaded at P&SC by member Barbara Briggs. Additionally, P&SC members have taken part in public testimonies and city council meetings to advocate for equity and nonviolence campaigns and attended WIN’s educational community gatherings (“WIN University”).

In June, P&SC organized a reception and concert fundraiser for WIN, featuring the MJP Power Trio (whose drummer is an FMW attendee). Including some matching funds, the concert raised \$30,000.

In November, P&SC organized a recruitment and information event with WIN Director Allison Dunn-Almaguer to strengthen FMW’s WIN Action Group.

Hunger and Homelessness Task Force

Although it functions independently, this task force is under the care of P&SC and consists of members C.J. Lewis (co-clerk), Eric Nothman (co-clerk), Steve Brooks, Emilie Schmeidler, Gray Handley, and Patty Murphy. This group does work to feed, clothe, and shelter homeless and unhoused people in DC. This work includes monthly work distributing food with the Salvation Army’s Grate Patrol, Christ House, and Church of the Pilgrims and annual work assembling and distributing clothes, food, and supplies in backpacks, this year occurring the weekend of 15 December. The task force gets additional support from affiliated organizations and FMW’s Religious Education community.

Apartheid-free Pledge

P&SC has worked to build support for the American Friends Service Committee-led [Apartheid-Free Communities](#) Pledge, which is a public coalition against apartheid both in our communities and abroad, with a particular focus on Palestine. In May of 2023, P&SC brought the Apartheid-Free Communities pledge for consideration by FMW’s Meeting for Business. In

October 2024, after much deliberation, the Meeting for Business approved FMW's signing onto the pledge.

Election Protection & Democracy

P&SC had representatives participating in the [Quaker Call for Action](#) workshops and dialogues, an organization of Quakers working primarily to protect democratic processes and voting rights in anticipation of the 2024 elections.

In spring of 2024, P&SC approved a Social Justice Fund grant (see [Grants Awarded](#)) to facilitate FMW community participation in [Reclaim Our Vote](#), which included funds for postcards and postage; volunteers at FMW then handwrote non-partisan messages (encouraging voting and including information on voting) that were sent to communities with historically low voter turnout. Approximately 2,000 postcards were sent under the leadership of JE McNeil.

P&SC approved funds for FMW community members who needed support for travel or registration to attend FCNL's Quaker Public Policy Institute (13-17 November) and AFSC's Apartheid-Free Convening (7 December) to build wider FMW participation in these missions. In the future, the Committee will attempt to inform people earlier if these opportunities are available. Two P&SC committee members attended and will report back.

Income Inequality

P&SC is in the process of organizing a dialogue on universal basic income, featuring several qualified voices in the economics field, under the leadership of member Peter Nye.

Finances

The Crews Social Justice Fund

Since 2020, P&SC has been tasked with management of FMW's Social Justice Fund, which originated with a bequest of \$28,000 by Thomas Crews. It was agreed that the funds should be used for social justice, peace, and climate work of the FMW community and small grants to facilitate projects in which FMW members and attenders were involved. In addition, P&SC has assumed responsibility for payment of FMW's annual dues to the Washington Interfaith and covers costs of some program materials (e.g. voter registration postcards, meeting banners) through the Social Justice Fund

Most of the fund's income has come from the annual Polar Bear Plunge, with 50% proceeds raised by FMW's Quaking Quakers going to support the Chesapeake Climate Action Network and 50% to support FMW's Social Justice Fund. The FMW team raised \$26,000 for the 10 February 2024 Polar Plunge; \$13,000 of that went to P&SC's Social Justice Fund.

The Social Justice Fund also receives some donations from community members and memorial contributions. (\$1,500 in calendar year 2024). We will work to keep the fund sustainable going forward through fundraising and thoughtful spending.

The Social Justice fund has approximately \$26,000 as of early 2025.

Grants Awarded

The following Social Justice Fund grants were approved in 2024:

- Washington Interfaith Network (WIN):
 - FMW affiliation dues (approved 2/25) \$5,000
 - Event space & beverages for fundraiser (approved 5/26) \$2,000
- Reclaim Our Vote / McNeil \$1,500
 - Non-partisan voter registration postcards and postage.
- Pilgrimage for a Just Peace / Allen-DuPraw \$1,000
 - Sabeel, Christians for Ceasefire, Rabbis for Ceasefire
- Nonviolence International \$1,000
 - Vigil/encampment support
- ReDelicious DC \$1,000
 - Local food waste reduction
- UNRWA \$1,000
 - General donation
- Nonviolence International \$1,000
 - Civilian protection, Faz3a

Summary & Looking Ahead

Peace and Social Concerns committee has acted in various ways to support issues of environmental stewardship, peace, equity, racial justice, and poverty throughout 2024 and continues to respond to current events. The Committee is committed to supporting just causes globally and locally. This will involve improving our role in the local social justice networks and supporting more FMW community members to become involved in local actions. The Committee has become increasingly adept at hosting events this year and will continue to do so. More social justice projects will be brought before P&SC seeking funding, and the committee will diligently discuss and approve as appropriate. P&SC is also aware of the need for sustainability in our actions, and will work to maintain the good that has been done so far. The committee actively welcomes new members and contributors.