

Worcester Friends Newsletter September 2017



Market Day Apple Crisp Making by the Walsh Family helped make September's Fundraiser a palatable success!

Calendar

Sunday Meeting for Worship: 11 A.M.

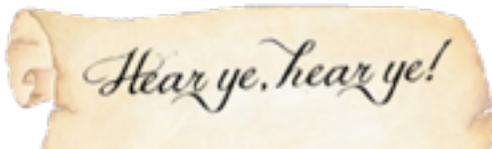
Childrens' Program: 11 A.M. (childcare year-round, First Day School program during school year)

Potluck Lunch: 12.15 P.M. every Sunday. Stay for fellowship.

Business Meeting: 2nd Sunday each month at 9 A.M.

The Meetinghouse is Handicapped Accessible

Note from the Editor:



The Worcester Friends Newsletter can be accessed at our website <http://worcesterfriendsmeeting.org/>

If you don't want to miss an issue, Friends may also subscribe to the monthly Newsletter on the above site (which saves the Meeting both printing and postage costs). Please let us know if you no longer wish to receive individual postal mailings.

Upcoming Special Events

Saturday, 10/7, 10:00 am.–4:00 pm. Agape Community Hardwick, Lakota Chief Looking Horse keynoting *Listening to Native Voices*, 2062 Greenwich Rd, Hardwick, MA 01082

Sunday, 10/8, 9:00 am. Meeting for Business. Members urged to attend, all welcome.

Sunday, 10/8, 1:30 pm. *Ad hoc* Committee on White privilege meets.

Sunday, 10/22, 10:30 am. Westerly Friends Meeting, Rhode Island-Smithfield Quarterly Meeting Worship, pot luck, Quarterly business. (See Clerk to carpool).

Monthly Meeting for Business, Worcester Friends Meeting

Date: **September 10, 2017**

Present: Daron Barnard, Katharine Barnard, Mary Bennett, Clarence Burley, Tom Brenner, Mary Chenaille, Jane Cutting, Katie Green, Karen Sargent, Matthew Shorten, Phil Stone, Mark Sullivan

Clerking: Daron Barnard

The meeting opened with silent worship and reading of NEYM Query 9: Stewardship, and reflections on those queries.

1. Business Items

- a. Distribution of the funds from Friend Rachel Carey-Harper. \$2000 was given to our Meeting to be used for social and humanitarian purposes. After careful discussion and consideration of current needs and issues, we decided to divide the funds between the Student Immigrant Movement and hurricane disaster relief in Texas and Florida. \$1000 will be donated to SIM and \$1000 to Texas and/or Florida according to need, channelled through Friends Meetings in Houston, Texas and Clearwater, Florida.
- b. The Meeting considered ways in which to be an ally to immigrant groups. Our meeting members involved in SURJ brought suggestions. As a Meeting, this issue is central to our values, and as such we agreed to offer the Meetinghouse as a Central MA meeting space for the Student Immigrant Movement. The offer will be extended for use of the space which can accommodate up to 50 people, with plan to waive any fee. Scheduling would be done through the Worcester Friends Meeting email so as not to conflict with other events.
- c. The annual appeal letter will be written by Phil Stone. It is proposed that as a fundraising technique, the Meeting offer to match donations through our savings.
- d. There has been a request to the Meeting for a member to bring a comfort dog to worship. We considered the way that we desire the Meeting to be a safe and welcoming space for all attenders, including those who wish their dogs to accompany them as well as those who might be allergic or afraid of dogs. After discussion, we agreed that a dog who can sit quietly for an hour would be welcomed. Dogs who interrupt silent worship would need to be taken out. We also will ask for flexibility from the dog owner to accept that there could be unforeseen circumstances such that the dog would not be able to stay on a particular day. Dogs will not be allowed in the dining room or kitchen. This expectation excepts service dogs, who would be accepted to attend with their owner. As we try out this policy, anyone with concerns can speak with the Clerk.

2. **Treasurers Report:** The treasurer reported that we are running a negative balance. There have been extra expenses in building upkeep (new windows in particular), higher gas costs, and lower automatic donations than anticipated. To address this, an annual appeal letter will be sent out by Phil Stone, Practical Committee members will look into NEYM funds which may support improvements to the Meetinghouse, and the Clerk will incorporate a reminder about signing up for automatic donation at the rise of Meeting.

3. Committee Reports:

- a. **Practical.** The committee met last First Day. They report that new Meetinghouse windows have been purchased and will be installed soon. The railing on the walkway has been repaired. Market Day will be held next weekend, and volunteers are needed for pie baking and set up and clean up. Installing a French drain in the front of the building would help keep the basement dry and that may be investigated. The Practical Committee has been considering requests for use of the Meetinghouse by outside groups, and that is confirmed to be the correct process.

Meeting members are looking to reconnect with the sanctuary network in Worcester after a lapse in involvement over the summer; the committee would consider any practical aspects that arise in our Meeting's involvement. One of the next steps will be that Katie Green will contact Minga Claggett-Bourne for recommendations and a request that she visit the Meeting to present on her work.

- b. **Spiritual Life.** The committee met last First Day. The main item for consideration was preparation for the September 17 discussion of NEYM's minute on white supremacy. The minute and the NEYM questions will be distributed by email for consideration prior to the 17th. NEYM's queries will form the structure of the discussion. The committee also considered support for the First Day School program, and also how to maintain a spiritual focus in our discussion and work on climate change.
- c. **Gifts and Leadings.** Paul Gallagher is nominated and approved to serve as the representative to the Quarter's Aldrich Fund. Mary Chenaille has volunteered and been approved to fill the position of Recorder for the Meeting, with technical support as requested.
- d. **Peace Social Concerns and Outreach.**
 - i. Appearance on Channel 3 television: the committee considered the best use of our spot, and who best to represent the Meeting.
 - ii. The July 26 SURJ meeting was held at the Meetinghouse. Meeting members and attenders presented on racial disparity in the healthcare system and in the justice system.
 - iii. Matt Shorten shared the Southern Poverty Law Center materials on racial justice, especially designed for educators.
 - iv. The newly-formed Worcester Black-Jewish Alliance is sponsoring a concert and dinner today, September 10.
 - v. PSCO is spearheading letter-writing to elected officials, and the first supported letter writing will occur on September 24 at the rise of meeting.

4. Announcements:

- a. The childcare co-op which previously visited to see about use of the Meetinghouse space for their playgroup is no longer in need and the request has been withdrawn.
- b. Worcester State University will have an open event on September 19 with a talk by David Barsamian, an award-winning journalist, entitled "Media, Propaganda and US Foreign Policy"

The meeting closed with silence and then transitioned to meeting for worship.

Respectfully submitted,

Survivor's Guilt after Charlottesville

I have just learned that the Muslim Eid al Adha is based on a telling of the Abraham/Ibrahim and Issac/Ishmael story. Abraham or Ibramim is supposedly told by God to sacrifice his son, but when he raised the blade, it catches and he is told to sacrifice a wild ram caught nearby instead

I was thinking of the story of Moby Dick and the beginning where the narrator says, "Call me Ishmael." He is feeling guilty as the survivor of the loss of all the crew of the whaler Pequod and his fellow crewmen, his 'brothers', especially Queequeg, the pagan Polynesian harpooner. Ishmael is the 'survivor' and suffers the guilt of the loss of his brothers when they are sacrificed along with Captain Ahab. I see Ahab as Abraham and the whale as the 'act of god'. Ahab is destroyed for his willingness to bring his crew to harm, as Abraham/Ibrahim would have been for his completed sacrifice.

When we are willing to let people come to harm, we lose our souls.

-Karen Sargent

Discussion of NEYM Minute on White Supremacy-9/17/17

Clerking: Daron Barnard

Minutes: Katharine Barnard

In attendance: Mary Bennett, Sheila Brenner, Tom Brenner, Clarence Burley, Lucy Candib, Jane Cutting, Matthew Shorten, Richard Schmitt, Karen Sargent

Worcester Friends met on September 17, 2017, in a discussion dedicated to consideration of NEYM Sessions minute 2016-64. The meeting opened with silence, then a collective reading of the minute and its preamble as distributed by NEYM on October 4, 2016: <https://neym.org/news/2016-yearly-meeting-minute-white-supremacy>.

The Clerk then invited those gathered to respond to and ask questions about the minute.

There were questions about the strong word “colonization” which connotes an external process of domination and also has a connotation of inequity. We struggled with understanding how as white people we can honestly say that we were colonized in a way that does not belittle the experience of people of color. There was also reaction to the passivity implied in being colonized. In discussion it was suggested that the term “colonized” refers to the pervasive white privilege in our society that is part of all of our reality, and that this ideology has “colonized” all of us almost in the way that an infection would spread. We acknowledged and remembered that our country has as its history colonization and genocide. We acknowledged that we are all complicit in different ways, and that part of moving forward is recognizing our complicity.

There was also a sense that focusing on terminology distracts from the real work that needs to be done to effect change. We recognize a sense of urgency to respond to the issue of racism and white privilege as it has reached crisis proportions in our country.

It was suggested that NEYM strive to see the convergence of different “-isms”. The current crisis of race relations feels integrated with pervasive violence, the destruction of the environment and inequitable distribution of world resources. We suggest that white supremacy cannot be considered in isolation from the other issues.

There were questions about the meaning of a “cultural competency audit”. Members shared their understanding of the term “cultural competence” from other contexts. In the medical field we are moving towards “cultural humility” (rather than “competence”) because it feels important not to suggest that one can completely understand (ie. “become competent in”) the experience of another person. It was also emphasized that one of the first steps towards humility is understanding our own biases and what we bring to an interaction. It is also brought up that Quakers have some strengths in this area, both in terms of recognizing people as individuals, as well as historically speaking out against injustice.

Multiple members of our Meeting have been involved with the local chapter of SURJ as well as groups seeking to end Mass Incarceration. They bring their knowledge and experiences to the Meeting, as well as sharing their Quaker perspective with the broader group. It is acknowledged that these have largely been the work of individuals.

Our Meeting as a whole has discussed involvement in the Sanctuary Movement. The discussion, while taken up by the Meeting at large, has been propelled by the leadings of individuals. To some it has felt slow and they wonder how committed the Meeting is. While it is acknowledged that some of the slow pace is related to the small size of the Meeting and the process of Quaker decision-making, the lack of perceived urgency is an instance of complicity.

One challenge is that we are a Meeting that is mostly white. How do we discern priorities and have this discussion in the absence of people of color?

While sometimes committees have gotten involved in activities suggested by individuals, the Meeting has not taken a leadership role in the community on the issue. How can we be more visible? How can we move towards action, rather than just discussion? This gathered group feels a strong leading to true Meeting-wide action on issues of race. Some suggestions for next steps were brought forward:

- We suggest forming a formal committee within the Meeting that would head up anti-racism efforts. This would allow a focal point for the energy that the meeting has on this issue, and also provide validation that this is not a transient or “ad-hoc” issue, but rather an issue that will need ongoing attention and also one that transcends the content of any of our existing committees.
 - First step would be to discern a convener
 - The group could bring ideas and priorities to business meeting
- Displaying a Black Lives Matter sign outside the Meetinghouse as a visible display of support and solidarity. We would challenge meeting members to go to the Black Lives Matter website and learn and read about the origins of the movement. That will enable us to truly get behind the movement, as well as to answer any questions that may arise from others in the community.
- Hosting an outside speaker who provides community education on race issues.
- Partnering with a black church for social interaction or community projects.
- Seeking other community resources such as the local NAACP chapter to provide direction to our efforts.
- There are many good resources for reading and discussion. At the least we could compile a reading list, and then also consider forums for discussion. The list, as well as responses to the readings, can be shared through the newsletter.
- We would plan to involve the First Day School in discussion and activities.
- We appreciate ongoing announcements of community events, as this continues to focus our attention on race issues. We also recognize that as we attend outside events “as Quakers” it will expand community awareness of Quakers.

White privilege: “White privilege refers to any advantage, opportunity, benefit, head start, or general protection from negative societal mistreatment, which persons deemed white will typically enjoy, but which others will generally not enjoy. These benefits can be material, social, or psychological”

- Tim Wise

White supremacy: A historically based, institutionally perpetuated system of exploitation and oppression of continents, nations and peoples of color by white peoples and nations of the European continent for the purpose of maintaining and defending a system of wealth, power and privilege.

-Challenging White Supremacy Workshops, San Francisco, CA

...Let us suppose, then, that the inhabitants of the moon, by astonishing advancement in science, and by profound insight into that ineffable lunar philosophy...let us suppose, I say, that the inhabitants of the moon, by these means, had arrived at such a command of their energies, such an enviable state of perfectibility, as to control the elements, and navigate the boundless regions of space. Let us suppose a roving crew of these soaring philosophers, in the course of an aerial voyage of discovery among the stars, should chance to alight upon this outlandish planet...

To return, then, to my supposition—let us suppose that the aerial visitants I have mentioned, possessed of vastly superior knowledge to ourselves—that is to say, possessed of superior knowledge in the art of extermination—riding on hippogriffs—defended with impenetrable armor—armed with concentrated sunbeams, and provided with vast engines, to hurl enormous moonstones; in short, let us suppose them, if our vanity will permit the supposition, as superior to us in knowledge, and consequently in power, as the Europeans were to the Indians when they first discovered them. All this is very possible, it is only our self-sufficiency that makes us think otherwise; and I warrant the poor savages, before they had any knowledge of the white men, armed in all the terrors of glittering steel and tremendous gunpowder, were as perfectly convinced that they themselves were the wisest, the most virtuous, powerful, and perfect of created beings...

Let us suppose, moreover, that the aerial voyagers, finding this planet to be nothing but a howling wilderness, inhabited by us poor savages and wild beasts, shall take formal possession of it, in the name of his most gracious and philosophic excellency, the Man in the Moon. Finding however that their numbers are incompetent to hold it in complete subjection, on account of the ferocious barbarity of its inhabitants, they shall take our worthy President, the King of England, the Emperor of Hayti, the mighty Bonaparte, and the great King of Bantam, and, returning to their native planet, shall carry them to court, as were the Indian chiefs led about as spectacles in the courts of Europe...they shall address the puissant Man in the Moon in, as near as I can conjecture, the following terms:—

"Most serene and mighty Potentate, whose dominions extend as far as eye can reach, who rideth on the Great Bear, useth the sun as a looking glass, and maintaineth unrivaled control over tides, madmen, and sea-crabs. We, thy liege subjects, have just returned from a voyage of discovery, in the course of which we have landed and taken possession of that obscure little dirty planet, which thou beholdest rolling at a distance. The five uncouth monsters which we have brought into this august present were once very important chiefs among their fellow-savages, who are a race of beings totally destitute of the common attributes of humanity, and differing in everything from the inhabitants of the moon, inasmuch as they carry their heads upon their shoulders, instead of under their arms—have two eyes instead of one—are utterly destitute of tails, and of a variety of unseemly complexions, particularly of horrible whiteness, instead of pea-green.

"We have moreover found these miserable savages sunk into a state of the utmost ignorance and depravity, every man shamelessly living with his own wife, and rearing his own children, instead of indulging in that community of wives enjoined by the law of nature, as expounded by the philosophers of the moon. In a word, they have scarcely a gleam of true philosophy among them, but are, in fact, utter heretics, ignoramuses, and barbarians. Taking compassion, therefore, on the sad condition of these sublunary wretches, we have endeavored, while we remained on their planet, to introduce among them the light of reason and the comforts of the moon. We have treated them to mouthfuls of moonshine, and draughts of nitrous oxide, which they swallowed with incredible voracity, particularly the females; and we have likewise endeavored to instil into them the precepts of lunar philosophy. We have insisted upon their renouncing the contemptible shackles of religion and common sense, and adoring the profound, omnipotent, and all perfect energy, and the ecstatic, immutable, immovable perfection. But such was the unparalleled obstinacy of these wretched savages that they persisted in cleaving to their wives, and adhering to their religion, and absolutely set at nought the sublime doctrines of the moon—nay, among other abominable heresies they even went so far as blasphemously to

declare that this ineffable planet was made of nothing more nor less than green cheese!"

At these words, the great Man in the Moon (being a very profound philosopher) shall fall into a terrible passion, and possessing equal authority over things that do not belong to him, as did whilome his holiness the Pope, shall forthwith issue a formidable Bull, specifying, "That whereas a certain crew of Lunatics have lately discovered and taken possession of a newly-discovered planet called the earth; and that whereas it is inhabited by none but a race of two-legged animals that carry their heads on their shoulders instead of under their arms; cannot talk the Lunatic language; have two eyes instead of one; are destitute of tails, and of a horrible whiteness, instead of pea-green—therefore, and for a variety of other excellent reasons, they are considered incapable of possessing any property in the planet they infest, and the right and title to it are confirmed to its original discoverers. And, furthermore, colonists who are now about to depart to the aforesaid planet are authorised and commanded to use every means to convert these infidel savages from the darkness of Christianity, and make them thorough and absolute Lunatics."

In consequence of this benevolent Bull, our philosophic benefactors go to work with hearty zeal. They seize upon our fertile territories, scourge us from our rightful possessions, relieve us from our wives, and when we are unreasonable enough to complain, they will turn upon us and say, "Miserable barbarians! ungrateful wretches! have we not come thousands of miles to improve your worthless planet? have we not fed you with moonshine! have we not intoxicated you with nitrous oxide? does not our moon give you light every night? and have you the baseness to murmur, when we claim a pitiful return for all these benefits?" But finding that we not only persist in absolute contempt of their reasoning and disbelief in their philosophy, but even go so far as daringly to defend our property, their patience shall be exhausted, and they shall resort to their superior powers of argument; hunt us with hippogriffs, transfix us with concentrated sunbeams, demolish our cities with moonstones; until having by main force

converted us to the true faith, they shall graciously permit us to exist in the torrid deserts of Arabia, or the frozen regions of Lapland, there to enjoy the blessings of civilization and the charms of lunar philosophy, in much the same manner as the reformed and enlightened savages of this country are kindly suffered to inhabit the inhospitable forests of the north, or the impenetrable wilderness of South America...

-Washington Irving's *Knickerbocker's History of New York*

The above excerpt (in anticipation of "Columbus Day" and "savagely" cut by the editor) was submitted by Clarence Burley to add to our continuing discussion of White Privilege. Friends are invited to join the discussion every other Sunday at 1:30 pm after Potluck. The next meeting will be 10/8/17. Friends may also seek out Lucy Candib if they are interested in gaining access to her public Dropbox for more resources on becoming aware of our privilege.

Aaron's Friendly Fare:
Monthly Culinary Column
by Aaron Sakulich



In many ways, William Penn is the public face of Quakerism. This is, sadly, mostly because Pepsico uses a painting of a "similar, but legally distinct" individual to market a line of awful breakfast products. Certainly, the readership of this newsletter needs no review of Penn's many other accomplishments. I have therefore decided to dedicate this column to exploring a little-known side of William Penn: the gourmet. In his love of food, Penn was not unusual - Quakers have always been associated with good eating. In fact, in 1880 the first commercially available cream cheese was named after Philadelphia, despite being produced in upstate New York, because the name of that Quaker City was, and is, synonymous with exceptional dining.

In *Some Fruits of Solitude*, Penn wrote "The Receipts of Cookery are swell'd to a Volume, but a good Stomach excels them all; to which nothing contributes more than Industry and Temperance. It is a cruel Folly to offer up to Ostentation so many Lives of Creatures, as make up the State of our Treats; as it is a prodigal one to spend more in Sawce than in Meat." In this spirit, let us consider the following recipe:

2 cups Scotch Bonnet peppers (no stem)
1 ripe mango
2/3 cup inexpensive yellow mustard
1/3 cup orange juice
1/3 cup brown sugar
1/3 teaspoon ground cumin
1/3 teaspoon ground coriander
1 teaspoon ground curry
1 teaspoon ground pepper
2 teaspoons salt

Combine all ingredients in a blender and process until smooth to produce roughly two pints, and store in a wide-mouth jar. Given the rather Quakerly name 'Inner Beauty Hot Sauce' by Chris Schlesinger, this sauce goes very well with chicken or fish, particularly if cooked on a grill with friends. It should be used sparingly, as the two cups of scotch bonnet peppers make it eye-wateringly spicy - and it would, of course, be a prodigal folly to spend more in Sawce than in Meat.

Worcester Friends Meeting
 Religious Society of Friends
 (Quakers)
 901 Pleasant Street
 Worcester, MA 01602



Scheduled Meetings

Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business	-----	Second Sunday, 9 AM
Spiritual Life Committee, convener, Matthew Shorten	-----	Fourth Sunday, 9:30 AM
Practical Committee,	-----	First Sunday, 9:30 AM
Peace/Social Concerns/Outreach, convener Karen Sargent	-----	Fourth Saturday, 9:30 AM
Clerk of Worcester Friends Meeting	-----	Daron Barnard
Recording Clerk	-----	Katharine Barnard
Corresponding Clerk	-----	Clarence Burley
First Day School	-----	Katie Green, Katharine Barnard
Newsletter	-----	Sheila Brenner

Please send general correspondence to info@worcesterfriendsmeeting.org. Items of note for the next Newsletter may also be sent to brennerfamily@gmail.com.