

Charleston Friends Meeting

RCCR Building
(Religious Coalition for Community Renewal)
1516 Washington Street East
Charleston, WV
<http://charlestonwv.quaker.org/>

Meeting for Business

September 9, 2017

Meeting was opened in silence.

Minutes of the previous Meeting for Business were approved.

Treasurer's Report for August was received and accepted.

Visit to Greenbrier Valley Worship Group

Charles, Karen, and Roger visited GVWG August 20th for worship, fellowship, and to participate in a Clearness Committee on membership for Scott Womack. GVWG had a good turnout and we shared a very good pot luck lunch.

Clearness Committee report: After a probing interview, the committee agreed Scott is clear in his desire and prepared for membership. It recommends that Charleston Friends Meeting welcome him into membership in the Religious Society of Friends and Charleston Monthly Meeting

Minute of Membership

Meeting accepted Scott Womack into membership in the Religious Society of Friends and Charleston Monthly Meeting. We traditionally celebrate new memberships and will return to Greenbrier Valley in the fall.

WV Statewide Gathering

Registration forms, directions, and a map package were sent out August 30th. The schedule was also sent to our email lists September 8th. A mistake in the address for responding has complicated things, but corrective measures have been taken.

Reminder: register soon, bring books for the book exchange, and snacks or finger food if you can.

Books for Religious Education

Copies of Margaret Hope Bacon's *Mothers of Feminism: The Story of Quaker Women in America* were distributed, and extras are stored on our library shelves. We will begin discussing the book at Second Hour starting September 24th

Calendar:

Meeting for Worship is at 10 am at RCCR Building, unless noted here otherwise

Activities for Second Hour after Meeting for Worship:

- Sep 17 Because of SAYMA Representatives Meeting and several other known absences, Second Hour will be a brunch at SOHO's, Capitol Market
- Sep 24 Discussion of *Mothers of Feminism* Introduction and Chapter 1
- Oct 1 Meeting for Business
- Oct 8 WV Statewide Friends Gathering near Huttonsville – no meeting in Charleston
- Oct 15 Report on SAYMA rep meeting and WV Gathering
- Oct 22 Discussion of *Mothers of Feminism*, Ch. 2
- Oct 29 Worship Sharing
- Nov 5 Meeting for Business

Bible study will meet at 7 pm September 13 at the Wise's, and 27th at a location to be announced.

Our next book group discussion will be Friday, October 27, at the Wellons'. Potluck at 6pm, discussion at 7pm. The book is *Where Do Dreams and Dreaming Go? A Palestinian Quaker in America*, by May Mansoor Munn.

WV Interfaith Refugee Ministry

WVIRM's executive board met September 6th with Mark Stevenson and Allison Duvall of Episcopal Migration Ministry in Charleston. The group will not be receiving refugees in the foreseeable future, but will continue to affiliate with EMM and is exploring ways to assist refugees in our area. The next WVIRM meeting will be Grano's restaurant in South Charleston at 6:30 on Thursday September 14th

Yearly Meeting Minutes published

As described in last month's Minutes, we requested that our detailed critique of the Uplifting Racial Justice Committee report be included in the Minutes of our Yearly Meeting . This was not done. The Yearly Meeting Minutes recognized our contribution with a single sentence: "Further consideration from the points of concern from Charleston meeting." [Two days after Meeting for Business, the Yearly Meeting clerk wrote, stating that a communication glitch had prevented him from reading our request.]

Consultation on Swannanoa Valley Meeting Minute on URJ

We received a proposed Minute from Swannanoa Valley Meeting and a request for our comment on it. Briefly, the proposal states opposition to organizing SAYMA's Uplifting Racial Justice standing committee (URJ) with membership restricted to Friends of Color; it further offers an alternative structure as an *ad hoc* committee, a task force, or a working group composed only of Friends of Color. The proposal also suggests expanding the focus of URJ to racial justice in the communities where our Meetings are located – schools, legal systems, *etc.*

The proposal has been circulated within Charleston Meeting and generated some thoughtful responses. Attendees discussed the proposal, reviewed these responses, and set our considerations in this Minute:

It is right and proper to form a committee to address issues of race within SAYMA. However, Charleston Friends Meeting has not come to unity to support either racially exclusive or racially inclusive committees. The proposal to expand the committee's scope to include the communities around us would not directly address the expressed focus on SAYMA by its Friends of Color, so we do not support it.

Context: Charleston Friends recognize racially restricted committees as incompatible with Friends' founding testimony of equality. Some give compensating weight to the thesis supporting a racially restricted committee, showing respect for their authority on issues that affect Friends of Color, without their needing to rely on the assent of white Friends. A Friend noted that the attempt to expand the focus of the committee could be interpreted as a deflection of the underlying concerns Friends of Color have expressed. Another Friend offered a different structure for the committee, a hybrid consisting of an overarching committee of mixed races with a majority and clerked by Friends of Color, and two racially homogeneous subcommittees. The subcommittees would provide venues for private discussion of issues, and while the larger committee would provide the arena for Friends of Color to exert their authority.