

Concord Quarterly News

of the Religious Society of Friends

Concord Quarterly Meeting Newsletter Volume 19, Issue 3, July 2022

Food for Thought!

(A program on nutrition at our next Quarterly Meeting at Westtown held jointly with Western Quarter)

Did you know that our brains continue to develop throughout our lives? From birth to age three, we form a million neural connections each second and brain development continues well into our lives as teens. As adults we strengthen and improve the complex functions of our brains and as seniors we maintain our brain function by continuing to learn new things. Did you know that 60% of our brains are composed of fat? So are there things we can do to boost and support the growth and effectiveness of our brains throughout our lives?

A brain healthy lifestyle starts with healthy food, exercise and stress reduction. Improving learning, attention, mood and memory are important at all stages of human development. We have all heard of heart-healthy nutrition, but are we as familiar with brain-healthy nutrition? Are you interested in learning more and considering changes that may help your brain and those of your family?

Mark your calendars for Sunday, July 17, 2022, when Mary-Anne Ost, MD, will join us to provide information and encouragement on



life choices to support brain function and to maintain vitality and independence throughout our lives.

Dr. Ost has a lifelong passion for good nutrition and healthy life styles. She is a member of the MDVIP network of physicians who are committed to “life-changing, personalized, preventive care so that patients can lead healthier and more vibrant lives.” She is Board certified in Family Medicine and Geriatrics and her family practice has offices in Kennett and West Grove. She is the Medical Director for Linden Hall, part of the Friends Home in Kennett.

Dr. Ost is also a member of London Grove Monthly Meeting and frequently attends Kennett Meeting. She enjoys working collaboratively with patients to find and maintain a path to wellness and taking the time to educate and personalize her relationships with those in her care. We are very lucky that she will be sharing with us her passion and abundant knowledge of nutrition as a pathway to better living.

This promises to be a wonderfully engaging program with information, suggestions and encouragement for all. Friends from Concord and Western Quarter will join together for worship at 10:15 and the program will start at 11:45. You may participate either in person in the Westtown Meeting Room or on Zoom. Please bring a bag lunch if you will be attending in person! Fellowship, information and reflection among friends – it will be a great opportunity to spend a lovely summer first day with our friends in Western Quarter. Can’t wait to see you there!

- Debbie Murray Sheppard - Wilmington Meeting

BE PART OF THE NUTRITION PROGRAM AT QUARTERLY MEETING

As part of the discussion around food and nutrition, friends are encouraged to complete a Food Diary for a typical day. Include typical things you eat for breakfast, lunch, dinner, and snacks. You can also tell us how you exercise if you want. The form is on the QM event web page. Fill it out by July 12 and it will be submitted anonymously to our coordinator who will send it along to Dr Ost. She will review the submissions and make comments and suggestions based on what she receives. We would love to have children fill out the form also. <https://concordquarter.org/nextqm-pastqm/2022/joint-concord-western-qm-mtg>

TODAY'S Geriatric Medicine

In preparation for our program by Dr. Ost I went searching through one of my favorite medical magazines, “Today’s Geriatric Medicine”. It is a publication written for professionals in the geriatric medical field. Although there is a lot of technical detail in the articles, I have found them very accessible. This magazine has provided me a number of helpful tips on many of the myriad maladies that come after us as we age. My search through the publication’s archives on nutrition topics lead me to the article: “MIND Diet May Oppugn Cognitive Decline”, published in their Nov/Dec 2015 issue. I bet you don’t know what “oppugn” means do you. It means “to call into question the truth or validity of”.

The article goes on to describe research out of Rush University Medical Center that identified “a new dietary pattern to determine the risk of cognitive decline in older adults. “To be brief, their research showed that “The MIND diet was found to be effective in slowing cognitive decline in older adults.” I don’t have the space here to provide specifics of the research. Nor can I elaborate on the acronym. Please go to the link below to find out more information. What I will put down is a sampling of foods

which the authors provided which come out of the MIND diet. I think you will find the list illuminating:

- Add garbanzo, black, or kidney beans to salads.
- Snack on walnuts, almonds, or pistachios.
- Include berries at lunch or as a snack daily.
- Use olive oil and vinegar for salad dressing instead of commercial dressings.
- Sprinkle nuts over pasta dishes, cereal, yogurt, or oatmeal.
- Make your own salad dressing by pureeing berries with olive oil and other spices.
- Swap steak and hamburger for white meat chicken or turkey, salmon, or tuna.
- Use beans as a primary source of protein in at least two meals per week.
- Sauté vegetables in olive oil instead of butter.
- Choose fruit or berries for dessert instead of cake or cookies.
- Experiment with different greens such as kale, spinach, collard/mustard greens, or Swiss chard.

<https://www.todaysgeriatricmedicine.com/archive/1115p24.shtml>

- Rich Ailes Middletown Meeting

The Value of Social Media in Outreach Efforts

In 2005 Facebook had 6 million users. This included college students and graduates exclusively. It became accessible to the public in 2006 and grew to 320 million users in 2011. Now, through the Global Pandemic of 2020, Facebook is home to 2.91 billion active users. Options for networking, connecting, and building community have expanded. The ability to organize and inform your audience has become easier as these platforms become more accessible. Invitations to upcoming events, sharing local resources and deepening the understanding of a community's needs are all available for free. Providing online and virtual service to the community has also made it easier for Seekers to find a safe, spiritual home.

Social Media is an opportunity. It provides a platform/platforms to paint a picture of the mission and testimonies of a Meeting. It allows a Meeting to express its unique offerings within the Religious Society of Friends. When a Meeting utilizes social media, it gives another layer of transparency to those looking to attend, join as members or get involved in a meaningful way.

George Eastburn, late board member at the William Penn Charter School, took to Twitter as an outlet for his optimistic observations during the Pandemic. *"Quakers are interesting people, and they see things differently – because they are often looking for a sense of faith and connection in the smallest things..."* states an article written by Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, January 2021. The touching article provides kind words and background of George's involvement in the Quaker Life Committee at Penn Charter. He led by example in showing the students and his community how to bring Spirit to

social media. His vulnerability helped others feel seen and heard even in isolation.

The Pandemic closed doors. It separated families. It slowed the progress of communities. And it continues to affect us all even after vaccines and precautions have been established. The main thing it showed us though, is that even if we are forced to physically be apart, we can continue to gather in safe, conscious ways. The hybrid method of Meeting for Worship, Meeting for Business and meeting as Friends forged a new avenue during a time when hope of returning in person seemed to be a lost dream. Social Media gave Friends a place to share these new ways of gathering which opened a new door for those who may not have considered Quakerism otherwise.

Social Media is not the end all be all. It is not the answer to all Outreach concerns, and it may not be accepted by some Friends who hold onto more traditional methods. Social Media is, however, a staple to many adults who utilize the applications to do research, network with colleagues and connect with their community. It is the here and now. It is the direction Youth are heading and it is a necessary outlet to consider for Outreach Methods. Having the largest following or getting the most likes is not a requirement, but the value of social media is bigger than resistance to change if it can reach even one Seeker looking for a way to deepen their Practice and exercise their Faith.

*-Bianca Santini-Dumas
- CQM Coordinator*



Kindergarten's Forest School at West Chester Friends School

Michelle Lozowski has taught at WCFS for 22 years, the last 16 in kindergarten. She is a member of West Chester Monthly Meeting. Michelle's experience and observations lead her to feel that increasingly, children are not outside playing in nature, discovering things that interest and delight them. She incorporates field trips to natural areas, particularly forested areas, in her regular curriculum. This fall, Michelle hopes to expand and enrich this practice, by taking her students to "Forest School" once a week, exploring a variety of natural areas such as ChesLen, Stroud, Marsh Creek, Valley Forge, and Shaw's Bridge Park. Michelle will incorporate Quaker testimonies as part of the forest day experience, focusing on:

- The simplicity of the forest, as animals and plants work and live together.
- The integrity we use as we honor the environment and leave the forest as we discover it each week.
- The peace we find as we experience walks, play and quiet writing and art time and reflection, as we visit the forest each week.



Author Richard Louv created the term, Nature Deficit Disorder, in his seventh book *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder*. He describes the documented dwindling of outdoor time for students, a phenomenon that has prompted many physicians to prescribe outdoor time as a vital aspect of a healthy childhood. Even simple, joyful activities such as listening to the birds' chatter can prepare young children to recognize basic word sounds. Many educators note that natural materials, as well as variable weather conditions and the conditions they create...mud, for instance, provide a setting for both independent learning and collaborative activities.

Teaching outdoors is not new to West Chester Friends School. Due to the pandemic in FY21 we taught all "specials" classes, such as Spanish, Library, Science, and Art, entirely outdoors. Students dressed appropriately, arriving at school in snowsuits on some days. Several teachers continue to teach outdoors in FY22. T. Michelle spends a good deal of her class time outdoors and enjoys "listening to them read to the chickens, seeing the children having the feeling of success when they hear the chicks talk back to them, in our "chicken forest" here at school."

T. Michelle says "My inspiration comes from my kindergarten students. Taking a group of kindergarteners into the forest opens the door to discovery, learning and questioning what they see, hear, touch and taste in nature. The wild, lush, beautiful surroundings open all their senses and imagination to so much." She loves to observe and listen to the children as they exclaim "look at what I found," "It has so many legs!" "I touched a toad for the first time today!" "Let's build a bridge to walk over the creek together then it won't take so long!"

Student's shared "Thank you T. Michelle for having us spend the day of fun outside!"

About Teacher Michelle

Michelle Lozowski has been an advocate for outdoor education for many years. She developed an outdoor classroom at WCFS, used extensively by the kindergarten and pre-kindergarten classes, and as a natural setting for early childhood study. She developed a small chicken yard with two resident laying hens. In 2017, Michelle organized and led at WCFS a peer gathering for the Friends Council on Education during which early childhood educators presented ways to integrate nature in their curriculums. The Brandywine Red Clay Alliance awarded Michelle the Watershed Teacher of the Year Award in 2018.

- Pam Sapko, Michelle Lozowski and Karen Iacobucci – WC Friends School

What is this Friendly Transition I am Called To?



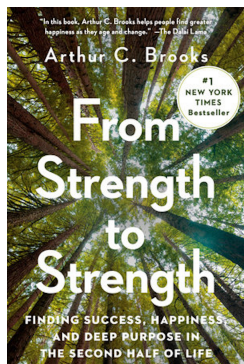
This summer, I am entering into a moment of transition that encompasses where I live, where I go to school, and where I worship as a Friend. I grew up with West Chester Monthly Meeting as a firm fixture in my life, attending every Sunday with my family and eventually applying to join the meeting membership. I also have spent the majority of my academic

life under the umbrella of Friends schools and in June I graduated from Westtown School. In the fall I'll be leaving for South Bend, Indiana to attend the University of Notre Dame. I believe there is often more to the experience of transitions than simply where you come from and where you go; there is also what you take with you.

Choosing Notre Dame was not an easy decision by any means. On one hand, it has been my dream school from before I can remember. I used to wear a Notre Dame hoodie to elementary school just about every day and dreamed of visiting the campus one day. On the other hand, I'd be choosing an unapologetically Catholic institution larger than any other school on my college list by far, and I'd be choosing it over a Quaker-affiliated school that resembles a lot of what I have loved about Westtown. In the end, I chose the school that would both take me a step outside of my comfort zone while also supporting the things that I hold closest to my heart and academic directions that I feel called to pursue.

While my family and friends were all supportive and excited over my decision, I did notice that the typical reactions from Quakers I interacted with this spring were more surprise, confusion, and even disappointment at times.

"Interesting place for a Quaker kid to go to college," one Westtown alumnus said to me with a jovial smirk during an Alumni Weekend event with current students. I understand the



From Strength to Strength, Finding Success, Happiness, and Deep Purpose in the Second Half of Life by Arthur C. Brooks - a Review

Arthur C. Brooks, a professor, columnist, musician and author provides a guide to a more meaningful journey through life as we age. When so much of getting older is deemed a time of limitation and diminishment, the author points the reader in the direction of purpose, happiness and even success. He explains in detail two phases of a professional life: "fluid intelligence", a phase of big ideas, inventions and innovation in our early years and then to "crystallized intelligence", a phase of collective and in-depth wisdom that can be informative and instructive to others in our later years. People often attempt to hold onto the first phase by desperately working harder and longer with unsatisfactory results.

surprise and the confusion perfectly well, and don't blame anyone for it at all. I have walked through my four years of high school seeking out every opportunity for Quaker involvement and action in my communities. The disappointment, however, I believe may come from a harmful place of thinking that Quakers have a corner on the market of "morally good" institutions. There is no unspoken law or chapter of *Faith and Practice* that says Quaker kids go to Quaker colleges, but there is the often-invoked testimony that calls us to, "come to walk cheerfully over the world, answering that of God in everyone." It is *that call* that I carry with me and that grounds me with faith in my decision. We sometimes forget the next part of that Fox quote: "whereby in them you may be a blessing and make the witness of God in them to bless you."

I have confidence in my future because I value what I take with me where I am going. I have no interest in commitment to the Catholic Church, in fact, I have never been more centered in my resolve that I am a Friend. It's my hope that I will both bring my Quaker faith into classrooms and experiences at Notre Dame, and that I will remain open to what I have to learn from others and their faith, mutual witness and mutual blessing.

At a recent meeting for worship with attention to business, I read a letter expressing identification as a Conscientious Objector to my community and entering that commitment into the records of the meeting. Another part of my college preparation this summer will be requesting a minute of travel from West Chester Meeting as I plan to attend South Bend Friends Meeting during the years while I am there, starting in the fall. Those actions as a Friend are the spirit of what I choose to take with me in this transition – drawing on Quakerism in my exploration of all that Notre Dame has to offer, grounded in a shared commitment to faith and good works.

- James Bradley – West Chester Meeting.

Brooks suggests that by moving from the first phase in our early years to the second phase we can use our collective knowledge to support others and causes, and along the way find meaningful purpose to our life in our later years. Attachments to what we have done, to the accumulation of more things only ties us down as opposed to being open to new possibilities with more satisfactory results that are freeing. The lessons that Brooks refers to as the "seven words to live by" are to "use things, love people and worship the divine", or to appreciate things for their usefulness rather than their status or even needing to own them; to love people by developing meaningful relationships broadly and in depth; and to worship the divine by devoting time and attention to some spiritual practice.

The reader may find that much of what is read is known or already understood but the author provides a refresher in rethinking the aging process and how we can respond to it in meaningful and satisfactory ways that in the end can be beneficial to us and others along life's journey.

Serita Spadoni, Birmingham Meeting

Concord Monthly Meeting has an opening for a Caretaker for its grounds. Duties include: Interfacing with visitors and community, grounds and meetinghouse maintenance, Meeting community communication. For further information or express interest, please contact Elizabeth Varley, Recording Clerk at 302-475-1098 or evlw@earthlink.net.

Concord Quarter July 2022 Announcements & Calendar of Events

Announcements

The draft minutes from our April 24 Quarterly Meeting via Zoom are on the website:

<https://concordquarter.org/documents/?category=Minutes> Please send any comments about those minutes to the Recording Clerk, Marty Boston, at mboston0916@gmail.com by July 12, 2022 so they can be presented for approval at the July 17th Quarterly Meeting.

PYM's Children and Families Program has a number of events including Community Playdates. For info and to register: <https://www.pym.org/children/events/>

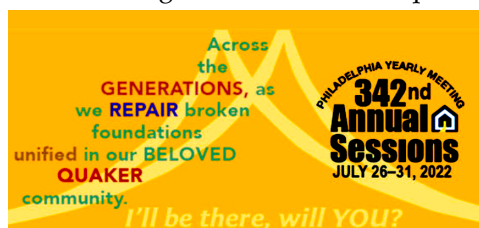
Pendle Hill has a number of programs available: <https://pendlehill.org/learn/workshops-courses-events/>

Friends General Conference now has year round programs for children and youth, programs for Friends of Color, virtual worship opportunities and more: <https://www.fgcquaker.org/virtual-opportunities-fgc> Retreats for high school aged youth of color: <https://www.fgcquaker.org/deepen/help-your-meeting-challenge-racism/virtual-retreats-youth-color>

Calendar of Events

For Updates and Future events with the Quarter visit: <http://concordquarter.org/quartercalendar/>

- Jul 6 10:30am** **CQ Working Group on Aging Concerns:** Open to anyone interested in aging concerns. For more info and to register email: concordquarter@pym.org
- Jul 17 8:30 am- 3:30 pm** **Concord Quarterly Meeting via Zoom,** hosted by Westtown Monthly Meeting as a Joint Quarterly Meeting with Western Quarter. Featuring Dr. Mary-Anne Ost and a presentation on nutrition supporting brain health. For more info go to: <https://concordquarter.org/nextqm-pastqm/2022/joint-concord-western-qm-mtg>
- Jul 19 7-8:00 pm** **CQ Working Group on Climate Action:** For more info on the group's work go to: <https://concordquarter.org/climate-action>
- Jul 22 12 pm - 5 pm** **Quaker Fun Day at Arch Street Meeting House:** Carnival games (think: big Jenga!), Bounce house, Concessions (popcorn, snow cones, soft pretzels), Make-and-take crafts, Music, and tours of the meeting house (including the new outdoor exhibits!). For more info and to register: <https://www.pym.org/event/quaker-fun-day/>
- Jul 23 10:00 am- 4:00 pm** **PYM Affinity Groups:** A unique opportunity for fellowship with Friends who share specific identities! For more info and to register: <https://www.pym.org/event/affinity-group-saturday/>
- Jul 23 4-5:30pm** **CAWG Disaster Planning Series:** Part IV: Emotional and Spiritual Care and Worship in Times of Disaster. For more info and to register: <https://concordquarter.org/climate-action/2022/cawg-disaster-preparedness-part4>
- Jul 26-27** **PYM Spiritual Formation Retreat:** This will help to ground and center participants in a deeper communion with Spirit while preparing individuals to participate, listen, and learn for the upcoming Annual Sessions week together. For more info and to register: <https://www.pym.org/event/spiritual-formation-retreat/>
- Jul 27-31** **Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Annual Sessions:** Across the Generations, as we repair broken foundations unified in our beloved Quaker community. For more info and to register: <https://www.pym.org/event/annual-sessions-2022/>
- July 31 2 pm** **Concord Quarter Planning Committee via Zoom.** Open to all interested in the activities and workings of Concord Quarter. Contact the Coordinator with questions and for the Zoom link at concordquarter@pym.org
- Aug 3 10:30am** **Concord Quarter Working Group on Aging Concerns:** Open to anyone interested in aging concerns. For more info and to register email: concordquarter@pym.org



Tubing Event Note: Due to flood damage at MaryEtta's home there will be no tubing this season. Reconstruction is happening so next year the tubing event should resume. Please hold MaryEtta in the light as she works through this trying time.

Joint Concord/Western Quarterly Meeting Virtual on Zoom/In-Person at Westtown Meeting July 17, 2022

Zoom Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/92668234836> (pw = wmm-mfw)

8:30-10:00am	Concord Quarterly Meeting for Worship with attention to Business
10:10 am	Hymn Singing
10:30 – 11:15	Joint Worship
11:15 - 11:45	Lunch Break (eat offline or <u>eat brown bag</u> at the Meetinghouse)
11:45-1:00pm	Food for Thought with Dr. Mary-Anne Ost – Also Edible Plant Search
1:30-3:00pm	Western Quarterly Meeting for Worship with attention to Business



Food for Thought A presentation by Dr. Mary-Anne Ost on how nutrition can support brain health

For many years American nutrition has been under the microscope. Various diets have been touted as solutions for diabetes, insomnia, cardiovascular disease, bone degeneration and yes even “brain fog”. Come to the next Quarterly Meeting and hear an opinion on all this from a prominent physician in our region who has focused on good nutrition and how it benefits our lives.



Dr. Mary-Anne Ost is a member of London Grove Monthly Meeting and a board-certified Family Medicine and Geriatric physician in Chester County. She is the Medical Director for Linden Hall, part of the Friends Home in Kennett. She is a member of the MDVIP network of physicians who are committed to “life-changing, personalized, preventive care so that patients can lead healthier and more vibrant lives.” Dr. Ost has a lifelong passion for good nutrition and healthy lifestyles and will share her knowledge and experience in nutrition and brain health. Join us either in person in the Westtown Meeting Room or by Zoom.

Participate in the discussion by filling out our online form on your sample menu choices from one of your typical days meals. Dr Ost will evaluate the submitted menus (anonymized) during her presentation. Form is at the bottom: <https://concordquarter.org/nextqm-pastqm/2022/joint-concord-western-qm-mtg>

Children and Youth Program at 11:45: Join Gwynne Ormsby and Bruce Harrison for a campus and field walk to look for wild edibles!!



For more info, email Bianca Santini-Dumas, Coordinator, at concordquarter@pym.org or Deb Wood at coordinator@westernquarterquakers.org
Event Website: <https://concordquarter.org/nextqm-pastqm/2022/joint-concord-western-qm-mtg>

Concord Quarterly Meeting via zoom - April 24, 2022 – Birmingham - Minutes

Opening Worship: The Clerk welcomed attendees to the meeting and began the meeting at 8:30 AM with a period of silent worship.

Welcome to Newcomers: Debbie Murray-Sheppard extended a welcome to newcomer Marcia Hepps from Westtown Meeting.

Monthly Meeting Count (Birmingham, Concord, Goshen, Middletown, West Chester, Westtown, Willistown, Wilmington)

Thirty-four friends were present as the meeting began. All the Meetings of the Quarter were represented except Concord Meeting and Middletown Meeting.

Approval of Agenda: Friends approved the agenda with one modification. The report from Delaware Valley Friends School is from the school not the Care Committee.

Approval of Minutes from January 23, 2022: The minutes from January meeting were approved as written. Debbie Murray-Sheppard thanked Marty Boston for doing the minutes.

Joys and Challenges Report from West Chester Monthly Meeting (attached): Chris Smith read the Joys and Challenges Report from West Chester Monthly Meeting. The Clerk asked Friends present to hold West Chester Friends in the Light.

Treasurer's Report (attached): Charles Spadoni reviewed the Treasurer's report. The check from the Shoemaker grant that had not been received when the document was written was delivered last week. Friends approved the same budget for 2022 as last year with the condition that if there are unanticipated increased expenses, the budget could be revisited at that time.

Nominating Committee Report: Julie Senko presented the report. The Quarter approved an extension of current clerk, Debbie Murray-Sheppard, for an additional year and that of assistant clerk, Chris McKenney, for an additional year. Debbie talked about how having a strong Quarter can be of benefit to monthly meetings and she encouraged Friends to be involved with the work of the Quarter.

Working Group on Aging Concerns (attached): Evelyn Brownlee gave a report from the Working Group on Aging. The program about nutrition called "Age Proof Your Brain" has been shared on the Quarter's website. Evelyn invited people to join the group that meets monthly on the first Wednesday of the month.

Climate Action Working Group (attached): Paula Kline gave a report on the Climate Action Working Group. The focus of the Working Group is to help Friends' institutions to develop environmental disaster preparedness plans and to reduce their carbon footprints. The Working Group would like to expand to all local Friend's meetings, retirement centers, and schools. The Working Group meets on the third Tuesday of the month, with the next meeting on May 17th. The Quarter's most recent newsletter included an article about the goals of the Working Group. The Working Group shared a video about the climate disaster at the Brandywine River Museum that Friends found to be informative. Bill Laky gave a summary of survey results from the groups that have responded to date. The Group is hoping to communicate with all the Property Committees of meetings in the Quarter. The July program will be

Delaware Valley Friends School (attached): Gray Goodman gave a report for the Delaware Valley Friends School. The school has 323 students who have learning differences, an all-time high. The school is in the second year developing a strategic plan. Masking for COVID is now optional for students and staff. The Care Committee has not been able to join students for meeting for worship due to the pandemic but are hoping that these meetings may resume next school year. Susan Brodesser from the Delaware Valley Friends School Care Committee invited everyone from the Quarter to attend the Care Committee Meetings which are held in September, January, and May.

Westtown School wrote a grant to provide training on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and invited Delaware Valley Friends School to take part in the training. Melinda Werner Bradly asked that the Quarter might try to have some communication between Friends who serve on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committees. It was suggested that the Quarter consider the relationship between schools and meetings in the future and specifically include DEI work.

Friends accepted the report from Delaware Valley Friends School.

Coordinator's Report (attached): Bianca Santini-Dumas gave the Coordinator's Report. She asked that people go on the Facebook page to follow the page and to "like" posts. She is trying to expand the Facebook by adding articles, announcements, and links.

Sharing Across the Quarter: This topic had to be postponed due to time limitations.

Reading of Minutes for Approval: Marty Boston read the minutes for the items that Friends approved today. They are bolded and underlined above.

Second Count of Meetings in Attendance: Thirty-four people were present at the second count of the Meeting. All Meetings were represented except Middletown and Concord.

Quarterly Meeting YouTube Channel: This topic had to be postponed due to time limitations. The topic will be taken up at the Quarter's Planning Committee. Everyone in the Quarter is invited the Planning Committee, May 1 at 2 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Martha Boston, Recording Clerk

West Chester Meeting Report to Concord Quarterly Meeting Virtual Session 4/24/2022

West Chester has continued our journey through the pandemic with care for one another and our community. It is a joy to note that the Open Doors Project was completed this year. Providing greater access to our worship and social room spaces, and a beautifully renewed porch, this has been a joy for our meeting both because of the completion of a well-stewarded project, and the careful attention to accessibility it demonstrates. All three PYM priorities – anti-racism, climate justice, and membership/belonging – have touched our meeting in some way in the last year.

We gather for worship, and meeting for worship with attention to business, as a hybrid body with some on Zoom and others in the meetinghouse. It is a joy that those living at a distance or otherwise unable to attend in the meetinghouse continue to be part of

our community. We have been blessed both to have a clerk, Todd Krasnai, and others who are keeping track of Covid safety and know how to make this technology “work for us” as a meeting community. In the recent intergenerational discussions that prepared our Spiritual State of the Meeting report, we heard questions about how hybrid worship and returning to the meetinghouse have impacted vocal ministry and our sense of communal worship. These are questions we will continue to hold and explore together under the care of the Worship and Spiritual Growth Committee.

It was a joy to use the renovated “side porch” for three intergenerational gatherings in fall 2021, which were a re-imagining of Friendly Gatherings we hoped to do in small groups but shifted after recognizing the exhaustion and need for simple fellowship that Friends were feeling. We also used the porches for our Children’s Meeting and Young People’s Group programs throughout the fall. We have been blessed this year to welcome a Quaker and first-year WCU student, Joe Schiffer, to join us as the childcare/Children’s Meeting assistant, and his participation is both a joy and reminds us of the possibilities for outreach to the University community. Our Youth RE Committee has been creative and collaborative as they met first outdoors and then created a space for the YRE program in the social room when the WCFS class who was using the space returned to the school’s classroom building. We are looking forward to “rethinking” our social room space and how it can serve the meeting’s needs.

It is a joy to share that in the last year, we have welcomed three new members and several attenders. It is also a challenge that two families with children have not returned this year and one member transferred their membership; we released them with both love and sadness. Our relationships on “Quaker Block” in the borough of West Chester continue to be important to us. The meeting’s care relationship with West Chester Friends School includes close collaboration with the school on issues of property and finance thanks to the faithful service of the Stewardship Committee. Six members of our meeting serve on the WCFS Board of Trustees, and school families receive information from the weekly email about programs for children and youth sent out by our Youth Religious Education Committee. We were delighted to invite the WCFS and Hickman communities to a recent fellowship event and hope to resume more Quaker Block activities as the pandemic wanes.

More broadly, we seek to be a presence for justice and peace in the Borough of West Chester and continue to explore how to strengthen our meeting’s witness. The meeting is a faithful supporter of the West Chester Food Cupboard, through service shepherded by both the Witness and Outreach Committee and Youth RE. Recently, the Anti-racism Action Group of the meeting has come into the care of the Witness and Outreach Committee, and there is hope to deepen our witness in this area. In the last year, the ARAG brought forward several important ways to witness anti-racism work for us as individuals, families, and a meeting community. These included encouraging support for local Black-owned businesses, support for the Ujima Peace Center, and hosting the “Troubled Waters” concert celebrating Black composers as part of CQM in April 2021. We know there is more work to do and have wrestled recently with how to deepen our witness to racial justice. Our witness in the Quarter has included support for a Uganda asylee.

Additional challenges we see for our community are places where we have “growing edges.” In the process of creating our Spiritual State of the Meeting report for PYM we identified a hope to be more visible and connected in the West Chester community. (In December, the meetinghouse was part of a holiday tour hosted by the WC Library, and we hope for more opportunities to open our doors to WC area organizations using our space.) We know there is more to do to care for our Earth in crisis and are led by the Witness and Outreach Committee in finding projects in our small corner that do our part.

A great joy in the last year has been the times when we have been “all together.” Whether for threshing of the Spiritual State of the Meeting report, Community Worship, or times of fellowship, we are whole when all ages are together. We hope to continue to grow as a meeting community and be a welcoming place for all.

Todd Krasnai, Chris Smith, Melinda Wenner-Bradley - West Chester Friends Meeting

Nominating Committee Report to Concord Quarterly Meeting Virtual Session 4/24/2022 - If you or someone you know would be interested in a leadership role please do not hesitate to contact Deb Wood, Clerk (gdeb406@gmail.com) or Bianca Santini-Dumas, Coordinator (concordquarter@pym.org). Debbie Murray-Sheppard has agreed to serve the Quarter as clerk for an additional year and that of Chris McKenney has agreed to serve as assistant clerk for an additional year.

Concord Quarter Working Group on Aging Concerns Report to Concord Quarterly Meeting Virtual Session 4/24/2022 - The Concord Quarter Working Group on Aging continues to meet on the first Wednesday of the month. Meetings are continuing on Zoom. Members of the Working Group are writing testimonials to be posted on the website about why we joined and continue to be a part of this group. We recently hosted Elizabeth Kautz, a registered dietitian at Kendal-Crosslands, who gave a presentation called “Age Proof Your Brain” about eating well in all stages of life. This was recorded and will be made available on the website. We hope to sponsor in-person workshops again when people are comfortable gathering. We have done some by Zoom. We continue to look for a time for the workshops that will accommodate busy schedules. For more information, you can contact Bianca Santini-Dumas at concordquarter@pym.org or the clerk, Evelyn Brownlee: evelynbrownlee@gmail.com or visit <http://concordquarter.org/aging-concerns>

Concord Quarter Climate Action Working Group Report to Concord Quarterly Meeting Virtual Session 4/24/2022 - For more information, you can contact Bianca Santini-Dumas at concordquarter@pym.org or visit <http://concordquarter.org/climate-action>

Coordinator Report to Concord Quarterly Meeting Virtual Session 4/24/2022 - I continue to attend Meeting for Worship and Business of the Quarter’s Monthly Meetings. I continue to support the Working Groups. I continue to support individual requests. I updated the website calendar to reflect our current events incorporating Philadelphia Yearly Meeting’s calendar as well. I have attended PYM Threshing Sessions, Clerking Skills Workshops, and Continuing Sessions. I received the Laptop and Printer provided by the Technology Grant. On May 7th I will present the Quarter’s Story regarding the Grant.

Facebook Report:

Content: Reach has increased 296.2 %, Visits are up 18.4 %, Likes are down 46.2 %
Demographics: Women 58.9 % Men 41.1 %
Age: 18-24 .5%, 25-34 .5%, 35-44, 13%, 45-54 18%, 55-64 20%, 65+ 50%

Original content such as flyers, photos and graphics perform well with our audience. Continuing to like, share and comment on our content increases visibility. What are our goals for this coming quarter? I will Demonstrate How to “follow” our Facebook page.
- April 24, 2022 Bianca Santini-Dumas concordquarter@pym.org

Editor’s Note: Minutes are on our website at <https://concordquarter.org/documents/?category=Minutes> For a full unredacted Treasurer’s report please email our coordinator at concordquarter@pym.org

Concord Quarterly Meeting Newsletter
Volume 19 Issue 3 July 2022

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310 Park Avenue
Swarthmore, PA 19081

Clerk: Debbie Murray-Sheppard
Asst. Clerk pro tem: Chris McKenney
Recording Clerk: Marty Boston
Treasurer: Charles Spadoni
Coordinator: Bianca Santini-Dumas

Address Service Requested

Concord Quarter Meetings

Appoquinimink Preparative (Under Care of Wilmington MM)
Birmingham
Chichester Meetinghouse (Under Care of Concord MM)
Concord
Goshen
Middletown
West Chester
Westtown
Willistown
Wilmington

Editor: Rich Ailes

Published: January, April, July and October

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Submissions Due: March 17, June 17, September 17 and December 17

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