

# YARDLEY FRIENDS MEETING

## NEWSLETTER

October 2018

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65 North Main Street, Yardley PA 19067  
<http://yardleyfriendsmeeting.org/>

Meeting for Worship 10:00–11:00  
First Day School 10:15–11:00

Linda Jacobs, Clerk  
Ed Snyder, Newsletter Editor

### *This month at YFM*

#### **Oct 7**

Day of Witness for Memorial to the Lost

#### **Oct 10**

7 pm. Gun violence prevention committee meeting.

#### **Oct 14**

Meeting for Business following Meeting for Worship.

#### **Oct 21**

Adult education. Following the rise of Meeting and after Elevenses (aka around 11:30 am). Joe Coscia will share his spiritual journey with us.

#### **Oct 24**

7 pm. Gun violence prevention committee meeting.

#### **Oct 28**

Adult education. Following the rise of Meeting and after Elevenses (aka around 11:30 am). Tyler Hoff will talk to us about the work of Friends Services for the Aging.

### **Looking ahead**

#### **Nov 18**

Quarterly Meeting at Yardley

### *Around the Quarter*

#### **Oct 6**

1-3:30. Memorial Service for Enslaved People Buried at Middletown Meeting & 335th Anniversary

#### **Oct 14**

5-8. Peace Center's Annual Auction Gala - Spring Mill Manor - Ivyland, PA

*See this month's Quakerphernalia for details and all events and activities!*

### **Your Francis and Betty Irwin calendar inspiration for the month**

Let us live together, eat together.  
Together, let us do noble deeds  
And share the fruits.  
Let us understand each other,  
Casting aside ill-will and unkind ways.  
Let us work for peace and peace alone.

Hindu prayer

Newsletter cut-off is the 25th of each month.  
Contact me with articles, pictures, opinions, book reviews, etc. Ed Snyder [ed@mrpplansinc.com](mailto:ed@mrpplansinc.com)

Newsletters can be found on our website at  
<http://yardleyfriendsmeeting.org/news/>

**Quaker Decision Making**

Quaker Meetings generally make decisions together in Meeting for Business. Sometimes instant decisions are made in a different situation and setting. An example is the morning of Autumn Market in the rain. We gathered together to decide to continue in the rain or use the rain date. Often individual committees do a lot of the work towards making decisions. We try to do our best. There are times one or more of us feel strongly the decision is wrong. We should voice our opinion but things might move in a direction other than what we wish. Sometimes we have great knowledge on the subject and think we know it is wrong. What is the Quaker way to make decisions? Does it work?

The basis for Friends reaching decisions is a spiritual one. Friends undertake corporate discernment and decision making in the same expectant waiting for the guidance of the Spirit as in meeting for worship. This applies whatever God, spirit or greater good means to you. The Light within reminds us that everyone is worthy of listening to. With an open mind we realize we never know where truth lies and where the answer will come from. With continuous revelation in mind we realize that things don't always stay the same. Yesterday's answer may not be today's. Today's answer may not be what is best tomorrow.

Friends' discernment starts with deep listening which brings an unfolding of a sense of truth. Facts and feelings are heard and considered. Everyone who has something to share is encouraged to do so. We remain open to the Light beyond our self. Friends have faith that for those who question and seek, there is always a way forward.

Releasing our own preferences and opinions is easier said than done. We need to think of all involved and let the way open. Personal convictions are set aside in order to be led by a guide beyond the self. Information and reason serve to bring us closer to a higher purpose rather than an end in itself. When the needs and aspirations of the meeting take precedence over individual preferences it can be deeply satisfying.

Two terms to understand in Quaker decision making are "sense of the meeting" and "unity." Sense of the meeting is proposed by the clerk or some other person. It is a perception of a decision that has been reached and can be approved by the meeting or a statement of how the matter is proceeding at that point. Unity is spiritual oneness and harmony sought for the group. Not everyone needs to totally agree in order to reach unity. Sometimes unity is reached easily; sometimes it is a long journey.

When sense of meeting is stated people can approve, not be clear, stand aside or disapprove ("I'm not in Unity"). When someone is not in unity moving forward is slowed down. Disapproving is not a veto. People should explain their reasoning when they stand aside or are not in unity. It is important to keep unity while opinions diverge. There must be time for change to take place inwardly. In listening, open consideration, and sensitivity we may help us find clearness. The clerk might amend the sense of the meeting. We can only be divided if we put our partisanship ahead of unity, order and love.

Think about this. Can't we learn when we listen to everyone? Try to keep our initial feelings quiet and really contemplate. With an open mind consider that there may be an answer we never had considered. If we still think it isn't the best choice should we walk away? Is it something so bad? Might it be better to do what you can to help it be better? Or can you explain clearly what is so wrong with the hope that others will really listen and consider too? Or others might give you something new to consider?

## Query 10. Grounding for Transformed Lives: Equality and Justice

How does our meeting benefit from established patterns of prejudice, exploitation and economic convenience? What are we doing to change this?

How and how often does our meeting engage in a self-examination of its attitudes and actions regarding race, ability, gender, sexual orientation or class?

What steps are we taking as a meeting to inform ourselves about social injustice and ecological violence embedded in our political and economic systems?

What steps are we taking as a meeting to assure that our meeting and the committees and institutions under our care are respectful of the earth and its people?

*Do I regularly examine myself for attitudes and behavior that indicate any hidden prejudice regarding race, gender, sexual orientation, disability or class?*

*How do my lifestyle choices affect—positively or negatively—the causes of justice and peace in our nation, the community of nations and the whole of creation?*

*How do I demonstrate in my way of living, and in what I teach my children, that love of God entails acknowledging “that of God in every person”?*



Memorial to the Lost T-Shirt display. See last page for flyer on the Witness Day Ceremony on Sunday October 7 and a special speaker on Tuesday October 23.

## Book Review

Submitted by Joe Sundeen

*Factfulness: Ten Reasons We're Wrong About the World – and Why Things Are Better Than You Think*  
by Hans Rosling, with Ola Rosling and Anna Rosling Rönnlund  
Flatiron Books, 2018 255pp hardback

Hans Rosling, was a medical doctor, professor of international health, and renowned public educator. This book, published after his death, describes the ways in which lives lived in a bubble of misinformation lead us to many wrong conclusions about our world and how it really is. The author asked 13 questions of many knowledgeable audiences, and they invariably, overwhelmingly, answered them incorrectly. Educators, physicians, media types, and especially politicians were so confident in their notions about the world that they could not appreciate the facts. The questions and the factual answers are there for you to test yourself to see what preconceived notions you are guilty of having. He describes ten “factfulness rules of thumb”:

1. Gap – look for the majority, not the extremes
2. Negativity – we tend to expect bad news
3. Straight line – lines might bend as we try to predict the future
4. Fear – calculate the risks instead of expecting the worst
5. Size – get things in perspective
6. Generalization – question your categories before leaping to conclusions
7. Destiny – even slow change is still change
8. Single – get a tool box instead of relying on a single one (hammer looking for a nail)
9. Blame – resist pointing your finger
10. Urgency – take small steps and resist pressure to act immediately

He maintains that we all need a fact based world view to help us make better decisions. This applies to small personal decisions as well as global policies that are implemented without a full appreciation of all data. We as human beings have a strong dramatic instinct towards binary thinking – good vs evil - and are guilty of misremembering the past. We feel rather than think. He cautions us not to hope without reason, nor fear without reason. Critical thinking is almost impossible when we are scared – it is impossible to process all information, so we give undue emphasis to dramatic stories. Something frightening poses a perceived risk. Something dangerous poses a real risk. Our generalizations are based on our personal experience. We are impatient for change, and don't recognize that slow change is still change. Fixating on a single solution, a single tool, ignores imaginative approaches that might require a diversity of tools. When we blame the bad guy, we are done thinking. And false urgency subverts the credibility of long term activist causes (cites climate as an example). Trust is paramount, and the end does not justify the means, because when it is found out, trust is lost and reasonable people will tune out. He maintains that there are five global risks to worry about – a) global pandemic, b) financial collapse. c) World war, d) climate change, and e) extreme poverty. His comments about each is a) healthcare for all, b) no one predicting financial collapse, c) a violent response to losing financial control, d) global solidarity on climate, and finally e) ameliorating extreme poverty is a marathon not a sprint. A last possibility is the possibility of the unknown, where we need to stay curious, teach about the world, and combat ignorance. We need to teach humility and curiosity, because a fact based world view is more comfortable and less stressful, simply because the dramatic one is so negative and terrifying.



Even though it was a rainy day, there were lots of smiles at the Autumn Market!

**Yardley Friends Meeting is inviting faith-based communities, community leaders, local schools and concerned citizens to join us for interfaith events during September and October 2018, located at 65 North Main Street, Yardley, Pennsylvania 19067.**

**Witness Day Ceremony**

Sunday, October 7, 2018, at 11:30 AM - Yardley Friends Meeting – All are welcome

Come join us for a simple memorial service honoring the victims of gun homicide featured in our t-shirt memorial. Reading of the names, a prayer service, and a table of awareness information will be followed by fellowship and refreshments.

You are welcome to start your morning by joining us for our Worship service starting at 10 AM. All are welcome to attend.

**Special Speaker on Gun Violence Issues**

On Tuesday October 23, 2018 from 7 – 9 PM at Yardley Friends Meeting – All Are Welcome to Attend

Richie Schulz from Lutheran Ministries in Philadelphia will speak on gun violence in America and provide information on how Bucks residents can take action.



Mr. Schulz previously worked at Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, which is the larger Quaker Community to which Yardley Friends belong. Currently, he is the community educator at Lutheran Settlement House (LSH), where he trains people on how to support survivors of domestic violence in their professional and personal contexts. At LSH he also organizes the Men Can Campaign, which focuses on engaging men to join the anti-violence movement. He is an organizer with Philly Showing Up for Racial Justice.



Please join us as we endeavor to increase public awareness of the tragic toll exacted by gun violence and honor the victims in Bucks County Lost to gun homicide.

For further information please contact Peg Smedley via e-mail at: [smedley46@comcast.net](mailto:smedley46@comcast.net)