

## AQM WORSHIP AND MINISTRY COMMITTEE

Annual Report 5/6/2018 *(Presented 8/5/18)*

AQM Worship and Ministry Committee meets monthly to prayerfully explore the spiritual lives of our meetings and how we might support the gifts which arise among our members and attenders.

As we settled in worshipful silence for our first meeting without our former clerk, Christine Greenland, we remembered her selfless and loving devotion to the Quaker faith and her encouragement "to know one another in that which is Eternal" which continues to inform our work.

As we gather, we are reminded that living as Friends requires constant renewal in the Spirit and we reflect on the blessings and challenges of our faith community by asking: How do we welcome new visitors to our meetings? How do we share our faith with others and among ourselves? How can we enter with tender sympathy into the joys and sorrows of each others' lives ready to give help and receive it? How do we relate as Friends to the wider community?

At present we are composed of representatives from Abington, Gwynedd, Horsham, Plymouth, Richland, Unami, and Upper Dublin Meetings. We cordially invite Meetings who are not represented to bless us with your presence.

During the year we worshipped with Norristown, Byberry, and Plymouth Meetings enjoying their generous hospitality. We also appreciated their sharing of social justice and community activities in which they are involved as they live the testimonies.

We celebrated the Spirit-led activities of our Meetings:

Abington Meeting holds a Spring Fling Luncheon for new attenders and a Sundays at Seven group which discusses the SPICES and various modes of worship. In addition, there was a presentation on Benjamin Lay and an examination by members on how committees are grounded. First-Day School programs are geared to building a life of the Spirit.

Gwynedd's First-Day School Program has held well-attended sessions on Healing, the Palm Sunday experience and the many aspects of worship. Marcelle Martin presented a workshop on the spirituality of early Friends based on her book *Our Life is Love*. Once a month a Meeting for Worship for Healing is held and Friends in a supportive atmosphere are invited to hold loved ones in the Light. The community is also supporting Syrian Refugee families by partnering with the United Nations Commission for Refugees.

Horsham Meeting has joined with the Mennonite Conference on the Worm Project which provides free medication making it possible to save the lives of children who are afflicted with parasitic worms. In the fall Horsham Township asked the Meeting to participate in celebrating the township's 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. The Meeting opened its grounds and its doors to the community, sharing their historic building. A talk by a meeting member on township history was well received. In addition, the meeting also continues its relationship with the Quaker School at Horsham.

Plymouth's Meetinghouse while undergoing necessary construction because of termite damage has presented its community with challenges and opportunities resulting in closer fellowship as they work together. Midweek worship continues and Plymouth works diligently to ensure that worship remains at the center of community life. Members have also been active in attending township meetings attempting to preserve space around the Abolition Hall which is being surrounded by a townhouse development.

Richland has a very active care of members committee and is involved in the local food pantry.

Unami works with its local ministerium to facilitate peaceful conversation in the community among persons holding different political viewpoints in our trying times. Some members follow a leading to witness to social justice issues at the town's major intersection. Unami also continues its relationship with United Friends School.

Upper Dublin has been blessed with new members and attenders and has hosted a Quakerism 101 Course for the Meeting. A Spiritual Book Club brings members together while others participate in the Philadelphia Peace Walk.

AQM Worship and Ministry will continue to serve the Quarter with joy and hope and we ask you to hold us and all our Meetings in the Light as we seek to "know each other in that which is Eternal."

Respectfully submitted,

Anne Hill, clerk

TO: AQM Quarterly Meeting 8 Month 5 Day 2018 Horsham MM

From: Jim Fitzgerald Clerk Ad Hoc Refugee Com.

Dear Friends.

At AQM meeting at Richland, Feb. 2016 AQM united with Jim Fitzgerald's traveling minute on refugee relief for Syria. An ad hoc committee was formed under AMMs Peace and Social Concerns Committee with Roe Tormollen as clerk. AQM Quarterly fund, under Tom Rie and Lowell Booth, generously donated \$3500, AMM donated another \$1500. To date we have raised approximately \$9800.

As a Syrian family was not available, on August 31, 2016 we received the Tuhinya family from the Eastern Congo. They had been living in a refugee camp in Tanzania for the past 20 years. In conjunction with FARM (Faith Action Refugees Montgomery County) we supported the family and began their transition to adapting to living in the USA.

As of August 2018 the status of the family is as follows:

Esombo and Julithya Tuhinya have moved to Louisville, KY with their 4 children. The family has settled in with other family and Esombo is working in a meat packing plant . The children are in school and flourishing.

Furaha, Zenia, Josephine, and Maliwasha are living in Charlotte, NC with Zenia's father and his family. The girls are no longer in school.

Chakabutta will be living with a foster family in Oreland and attending Springfield High School. He should graduate in June 2019 with a high school diploma. His course after that has not yet been determined.

To date we have raised approximately \$9800. We still have about \$2800 in our account at Abington Friends, and a \$525 credit with Charity in Action in Bryn Athyn. We would like to pay off Chakabutta's airfare for \$890. We would like to contribute about \$1000 to Chakabutta's living expenses for the coming year. Any left over funds will be held at AMM and used towards his further education.

The ad hoc Refugee Committee's work is pretty much done. The Friends active in this endeavor are Lowell Booth, Cherie Gersadt, Don Dow, Annie Boagnie, Deirdre D'Agostino, and Jim Fitzgerald. Other Friends, too numerous to mention, have also contributed time and money and expertise in this endeavor.

We feel that our job is now complete. At this time we would ask to be laid down.

We would like to thank AQM, AMM, and all the Friends who made this journey possible. This has been a group effort and it could not have been accomplished without everyone's support..

With the kindest regards,

Jim Fitzgerald  
Clerk

**Please read during announcements following Meeting for Worship at Quarterly Meeting 8/5**

**From the Refugee Support Subcommittee of Gwynedd Friends Meeting**

An image of a mother of six children, at a shelter door in Aleppo, shows her clutching her baby as she stares out at her city, now in ruins. What will happen to her and her children? There is nothing left. Little Nawal, just 3, born in a country at war, knows too well the sound of exploding bombs and the sights of fires that follow. Will her experience scar her for the rest of her life?"

These images and stories keep Gwynedd Friends focused and dedicated to helping meet the needs of Syrian refugee families. With a population of 22 million before the war, there are now 5,000,000 Syrians who have fled from Syria, and another 6,000,000 who are trapped and internally displaced within Syria.

Our next event, a **Camp-a-thon for Peace**, will take place from **Saturday, September 29, at 4PM – Sunday morning at 9:00AM**. You are invited to pitch your tent on the Gwynedd Sports Field and spend a night under the stars in solidarity with the 65,800,000 refugees worldwide. A simple supper and breakfast will be served. Intergenerational peace-making games will take place and a program of conversation, including sharing by a Syrian refugee, will follow at a campfire. Following breakfast on Sunday morning all campers will be invited to attend meeting for worship. Cost is \$25 for the campsite and \$2/person for food (above 2y/o). Financial assistance available. All proceeds will be donated to the UNHCR cash assistance program for destitute Syrian families living in Jordan & Lebanon

See Chris Mrozinski for a flyer invitation to display at your Meeting.