

**Report of
Peace, Earthcare & Social Justice Committee
To Virginia Beach Friends Meeting for Business
8th day of 12th month, 2019**

“The power of the Spirit to bring people into unity was one of the happy discoveries of the early Friends....Sharing the Spirit of God within them underlay the deepest of all Quaker experiences, the unspoken awareness of the unification of the group by the Spirit in the silent meeting, where the whole body, and primarily its individuals, received power, wisdom, and joy.” (Hugh Barbour, 1964)

“Our social witness must be put upon this central experience of hearing the voice of Christ, obeying the Living Word of God, as it is spoken in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. It is only as we act in Christ’s Power that our social witness can be real and life-giving, acknowledged and blessed by our Heavenly Father, and most of all be truly effective. (Allistair Lomax)

--both quotations drawn from
the 2020 Friends’ Calendar published by the Tract Association of Friends.

Notes from our Committee Meeting on 1st day, Twelfth Month:

In attendance: Beth & Tom Bertrand, Nancy Delle Femine, Kathy Garner (for the first part of the meeting), Sally Gudas, Tom Kennedy, and Mary Pelham White.

- **We reviewed and approved the proposed agenda for the meeting.**
- **Holy Week Pilgrimage.** We received and discussed a request from Steve Baggarly on behalf of Pax Christi and the Norfolk Catholic Worker to utilize the Meeting House as their base of operation April 5-8 during their Holy Week Pilgrimage, commemorating the 75th anniversary year of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and raising awareness about the campaign to support the United Nations Treaty on the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons. As they did in 2014, the pilgrims would use our Meeting House for dinner and talks and logistical preparation on Palm Sunday evening, with out-of-towners sleeping in the Meeting House as their base of operations on Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday nights, after which they would move to a church on the Peninsula for the remainder of the week. In 2014, several members of our Friends Meeting joined the Pax Christi pilgrims for a portion of the pilgrimage and for worship services at our Meeting House and up on the Peninsula. In order to accommodate the request from Steve Baggarly, we would need to negotiate with Friends School, the Alcoholics Anonymous Chapter, and the Maririgage Counseling group to

work out scheduling conflicts. Tom Bertrand has volunteered to be the on-site VBFN liaison to the Pilgrims from Palm Sunday evening through Wednesday morning of Holy week.

Action Item: We recommend that the Meeting agree to co-sponsor and support the Holy Week Pilgrimage of Pax Christi and the Norfolk Catholic Worker by making the Meeting House available as a base of operations for the Pilgrims April 5-8 and by helping broker solutions to any scheduling conflicts that might arise with Friends School and other organizations which utilize our Meeting House.

- **Budget Recommendations for 2020:** The Committee spent over an hour discussing in detail each of the organizations that have been supported financially by our Meeting in recent years. After much deliberation, we arrived at the following recommendations to Meeting for Business for the 2020 Budget:

<u>Line item</u>	<u>Budgeted 2019</u>	<u>Recommended 2020</u>
PESJ general activities	200	200
JCOC	600	100
Norfolk Catholic Worker	50	250
Quaker House Fayetteville	100	100
Quaker UN Office	50	50
Steady Footsteps	350	350
Virginia Interfaith Center (VICPP)	100	100
American Friends Service Comm.	100	100
Ramallah Friends School	100	100
Quaker Earthcare Witness		100
FCNL	200	200
Friends School Trip to FCNL	500 *	500
Friends School Teacher Conf at Guilford College		500
Local Asylee Support		250
TOTAL REQUEST	2350	2850

* \$500 was budgeted for a trip by Friends School Students to FCNL in 2019, but the School was not able to utilize the funding due to other constraints

Action Item: We recommend that the Meeting approve the above budget expenditures in 2020.

- **Steady Footsteps.** While agreeing to recommend continued financial support of Steady Footsteps, we felt the need to establish ongoing communications with Virginia Lockett in Da Nang, Viet Nam, so that we can keep our members informed about the current work of her organization. Nancy Delle Femine agreed to take on the task of writing Virginia Lockett when our annual contribution is sent to Viet Nam in the new year.
- **Virginia Immigration Support Network:** We discussed the upcoming December 2 meeting at the Norfolk Unitarian Universalist Church organized by the Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy. Mary Pelham and Lewis White, Sally Gudas, Tom Kennedy and Tom Bertrand will attend that meeting. We approved the expenditure of the \$100 remaining in our Committee's 2019 discretionary fund to assist in organizing a support network for families in the Colonial Trailer Park.

Upcoming Events

Friday, December 20, 11-12 noon vigil to Disarm Trident and Sign the Nuclear Weapons Ban Treaty at Norfolk Naval Shipyard in Portsmouth, on Effingham just north of Portsmouth Blvd.

Also from Steve Baggaly: We are also readying to go speak at Portsmouth City Council and Norfolk City Council encouraging them to pass a resolution asking the government to sign the Treaty. Hopefully we'll go to Portsmouth in January and Norfolk in February. The more people that can be present in support of the Treaty, the better. Please keep an eye out for the announcement of our dates to go and join us if you can!

January 22, 2020, VICPP Day for All People, Richmond, VA, Lobbying day at the Virginia General Assembly, See <https://www.virginiainterfaithcenter.org/events/day-for-all-people-2/1579678200/1579705200/>

March 28-31, 2020, FCNL Spring Lobby Weekend for Young Friends, Washington DC

June 28-July 4, 2020, Friends General Conference (FGC) 2020 Gathering, Radford University, Radford, Virginia. The FGC 2020 Annual Gathering will be under the care of Baltimore Yearly Meeting.