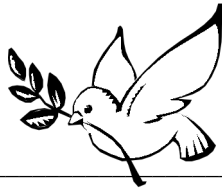


# Concord Quarterly News

of the Religious Society of Friends



## Concord Quarterly Meeting Newsletter Volume 20, Issue 2, April 2023

### The Climate Action Lobby

The earth is on fire! It is shaking, flooding, blowing, melting...all at the same time. And that does not bode well for those of us living on it today, and, sadly, it bodes worse for our children, grandchildren and all the other children coming after us. So, what can Friends do about it? That is at the core of our program being offered up by West Chester Friends at Quarterly Meeting on April 23 at 9 AM.

The reality is that we as individuals often seem overwhelmed when it comes to climate action. We recycle, we pick up trash, we write our representatives, we try to limit driving, experiment with new kinds of cars, new ways to heat our homes, but we end up wondering if it makes a difference.

It does, and that is what we will be talking about at our Quarterly Meeting program, with an emphasis on how we can help pursue large scale reduction of carbon emissions. Doing so is both an individual and group challenge. Our program will be presented by a representative of a bi-partisan organization that most Americans, alas, probably have not heard of – The Citizens Climate Lobby (CCL).

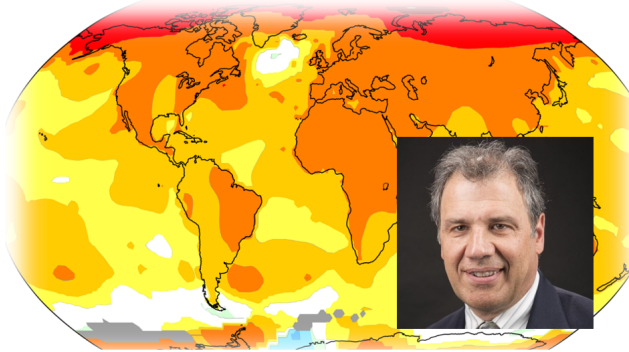
Matt Zencey is a Chester County resident. He is a former journalist, with 25 years of experience, mostly in Alaska where he saw first-hand how the Arctic and Sub-Arctic are rapidly warming. He later worked for the Philadelphia Inquirer as an editor and the Harrisburg Patriot-News/PennLive. Currently, he is president of the Unitarian Congregation of West Chester.

In semi-retirement, Matt has made climate change his focus, and he has become active in the local chapter of CCL. His program, which will be inter-active and involve youth and adults, will be a fun experience that will challenge participants' awareness around climate change and also explain how major efforts like carbon pollution fees can make a difference.

CCL was formed in 2007 by Marshall Saunders. Saunders was born in Texas, where his family owned "Big Red," a soft drink manufacturer. He graduated from the University of Texas, then worked as a smoke jumper in the Pacific Northwest, served in the Navy, and worked for Shell Oil before becoming a real estate broker in 1968. He also created a microfinancing program with banks to fund upcoming businesses in South America.

While that sounds like an unlikely path for a climate activist to follow, Saunders realized from his travels and experiences that Mother Earth was in trouble, and the trouble was coming from human beings.

His decision to create a grass-roots and bi-partisan movement came from a question he received while he was giving a talk at a senior citizens center. A woman asked him, "What should we do?" Saunders answered, "What's needed is thousands of ordinary people organized, lobbying their members of Congress with one voice and one message, and lobbying in a relentless, unstoppable, yet friendly and respectful way." "Why don't you do that?" the woman asked. And he did.



Saunders passed away in 2019 but his work has continued. Today there are 568 active CCL chapters across the U.S. with a membership approaching 250,000. CCL works in a bi-partisan fashion and is happy to report that our Sixth District representative, Chrissy Houlihan, may soon become the Democratic co-chair of the Bipartisan Climate Solutions Caucus in the U.S. House.

In addition to talking about the national efforts to reduce carbon emissions, Zencey will engage

Friends in discussions of what they can do locally. Time will be left for an exchange of ideas and questions at the end of the program before adjourning for a break followed by Meeting for Worship in-person and via Zoom at 10:30 AM.

- Rich Heiland is a member of West Chester Meeting

### Intro Statement for the Climate Action Report to PYM Sessions July 2021

*- As members of the Religious Society of Friends, we witness to the truth of our times. In this moment, we recognize that we are facing an existential crisis that requires more than individual actions. We already face catastrophic fires, storms, droughts, crop failures, and floods. Scientists tell us that what we do in the next decade will determine the fate of humanity.*

*Racial injustice, social injustice, and the climate crisis are inextricably linked; marginalized and economically disadvantaged communities suffer greater effects of this crisis. Many people already suffer and call us to act. Future generations depend on us to act. Knowing the consequences of inaction, integrity demands that we act.*

*On a fundamental level the Climate Crisis and our response to it is deeply linked to our testimonies of simplicity, peace, integrity, community, equality and stewardship.*

*As people of faith, seekers of the truth, and stewards of Creation, we must act with urgency to prevent further suffering and destruction of our planet. We seek to energize everyone involved with PYM to actively undertake this leading and help halt the destruction of life on this sacred earth.*

<https://www.pym.org/eco-justice-collaborative/>

**Middle School Friends and attenders - Friends in grades 5 to 8 are invited to join us for a fun-filled overnight at West Chester Friends Meeting. We will explore themes of sustainability and learn about our planet and our place in the world by growing our connection with each other and the land. Middle school friends and attenders who participate will have the opportunity to build connections with other middle school friends through plenty of fun activities. We'll play board games and outdoor games and pot some plants to take home! Join us as we plant seeds of community! Bring a friend!**

**The cost of the event is \$20/person. There is scholarship funding available. Cost should not keep anyone away — see registration form for more information. Please go here to register: <https://www.pym.org/event/middle-school-friends-spring-overnight/>**



## Philadelphia Yearly Meeting's theme for our Sessions this year is "Living with our Neighbors, Growing into Beloved Community."

**Let's unpack that sentence!** Philadelphia Yearly Meeting is the 104 local meetings and worship groups who gather across PA, DE, southern NJ, and northern MD. *WE are PYM* – every person who is an attender or member of a local meeting is part of both the wider Concord Quarterly Meeting and the even wider circle of Friends in the Yearly Meeting. The resources and events shared in PYM include programs for children & youth and young adults, support for witness and social justice leadings, grants for education and aging resources, and spiritual nurture for all ages. The PYM staff support this work and seek to engage with Friends to share their many gifts with all of us.

Three times a year, everyone in the communities of local meetings are invited to participate in "Sessions" as a Yearly Meeting community. The gatherings on the first Saturday in November and March are one-day, and in the last week of July last over 3-5 days (including a residential opportunity). The volunteers on the Sessions Coordinating Committee discern a theme for Sessions gatherings, and the current theme will carry through Fall Continuing Sessions

2023. The theme helps to focus parts of Sessions programs, including speakers and Youth Program activities. Like many past themes, the 2023 Sessions theme takes inspiration from Bible verses found in both the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament and the Gospels of the New Testament that encourage us how to treat our neighbors – Including to "love one another" as we are loved (John 13:34-35).

During programs at the Fall 2022 and Spring 2023 Continuing Sessions, the Yearly Meeting had opportunities to explore what it means to be neighbors – in the communities where our meetings are located, and for one another. Both gatherings included hospitality – we had a harvest dinner outside at Arch Street in November, and six regional host meetings opened their doors for baked potato lunch in March. There has been comfort in our innovations and expanded ability to gather with Friends online in the last three years, and now there is so much joy in also regathering in person where possible – to share meals, fellowship, and our connections between meetings. In Concord Quarter, we have a similar opportunity four times a year to come together and connect with neighboring meetings to share interests and fellowship. For our young people, CQM and PYM events are affirmations of belonging to a bigger Quaker community.

Annual Sessions, July 26-30, will be a blended program, online and in person at The College of New Jersey. *Mark your calendars for a wonderful weekend!*

- Melinda Wenner Bradley – PYM Director of Programs and a member of West Chester Meeting

## New Refugee Program "Welcome Corps" Should We Do It?

As On January 19, 2023, the Biden administration launched Welcome Corps, a new program that enables everyday Americans to come together to sponsor refugees as they resettle into their new lives in America.

Prior to the creation of Welcome Corps, private citizens who wished to help in this way had to partner with one of only nine authorized resettlement agencies. Some of the agencies have local offices or affiliates, but they are limited in terms of resources and geographic reach and, therefore, they aren't available in every community. Welcome Corps remedies that problem by being available to any group, in any community, that meets the program's requirements. (If you're interested, more detailed information can be found at <https://welcomecorps.org>.)

Some years ago, an interfaith group, the West Chester Area Refugee Resettlement Project, came together to help resettle a refugee family of seven in the West Chester borough, by partnering with Church World Service. Many of the group's participants were members of Concord Quarter. More recently, the team has been helping to

support an asylum seeker who Deb Wood, of Westtown MM, is sponsoring through the Asylum Seeker's Sponsorship Project.



With the advent of Welcome Corps, the group is considering the possibility of once again welcoming refugees. However, more helping hands are needed if sponsorship is to be viable. Volunteers who are willing to help with finding housing; furnishing basic necessities; finding employment; applying for benefits (e.g., SNAP, Medicaid); connecting the newcomers with health/mental health services and, possibly, ESL training, are needed, as are financial contributions.

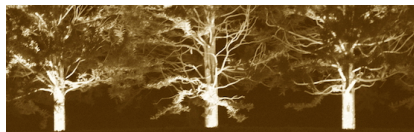
Quarter members and attenders and their friends, family members, colleagues, and neighbors are invited to attend a **virtual meeting on Tuesday, April 4, at 7 pm**, to consider this matter. Contact Susan Brodesser at [be\\_still@verizon.net](mailto:be_still@verizon.net) to receive the Zoom link.

-Susan Brodesser, Birmingham Meeting

<https://www.npr.org/2023/01/24/1150787789/alight-us-refugee-resettlement-policybiden>

## Quaker Trinity!

No, not a new Quaker theology, this is an article about two Meetings which have implemented a threesome-shared responsibility for Clerking. Wilmington Meeting has had 3 clerks working since 1998, while Westtown has embarked on this strategy as a year-long experiment starting only last September. Each Meeting uses 3 clerks to share the workload, but each has structured it differently.



Evelyn Brownlee, one of the current Wilmington clerks, tells us that even though they started the 3-clerk system in 1998, in 2008 they formalized the structure such that all clerks serve 3 year terms that are staggered. Here are the names of the current clerks and the year which their term ends: Debbie Fetzer, 6/2023, Evelyn Brownlee, 6/2024, Pam Cerchio, 6/2025. Nominating Committee tries not to reappoint a member for another term.

Advantages include shared knowledge and confidence that someone can stand in if there's an emergency or if there is a scheduling conflict. The entire responsibility of clerking is communally held rather than falling on a single person. An added benefit for their hybrid meetings, including business meeting, is having non-presiding clerks keep an eye on the

monitor to ensure all voices are heard. The Meeting community is very comfortable with this arrangement although it is still difficult to find individuals in the Meeting willing to clerk.

Laurie Worth and Cathy Schmidt of Westtown Monthly Meeting emailed about their experimental tri-clerk arrangement:

"As we were unable to find people willing to serve in this capacity even as a Co Clerk; as a Meeting we agreed to try an experiment for a year. As it stands, we have a system of tri-Clerks each serving for a four-month period. Each set of tri-Clerks reviews the necessary tasks for each week/month and divides them up amongst themselves. We have been open to exploring all options. One of the hopes for this experiment was to create more diversity in our Clerking. We have been successful in this endeavor. Each tri-clerk rotation has either a person of color, a younger person, or a different ethnicity, and often in there, will be one seasoned member. It has changed our landscape. Some Clerks are out of the area. For example, Maryland and Florida. We operate in person and on Zoom. It also feels that there is more interest in our Meeting and how we operate. There is also a new energy that is noticeable. We hope to iron out our areas of concern while celebrating the positive." (continued)

During the four-month period the 3 clerks share the normal clerking duties and huddle to plan agendas and deal with arising concerns. Could a possible benefit here be a brief, but valuable experience of clerking gets spread to a wider group of people, perhaps kindling a leading for a younger Friend to take on a more permanent calling? The current group of tri-clerks are Cathy Schmidt, Darrell Meyers and Rebecca Mays.

One critical part of Westtown's experiment is a mid-term survey created by their Coordination and Nurture Committee to go out to the Meeting



## Over the Horizon of your Individual Meeting

*What is the Quarterly Meeting and why is it important? I barely have enough time to get to my meeting for one hour on Sunday morning, and regular committee obligations are often hard to meet, EVEN with a Zoom option! Why do I need to add something more to my weekend schedule?*

If you have heard this voice in the back of your mind, friend, you are not alone. But let's be clear these thoughts do not originate with the "still small voice"! As friends, we are called to experience our faith, together, in order that our lives might be a testimony to the call to our beloved community.

Ok, so what is quarterly meeting and why should you include it on your family calendar? Concord Quarter is comprised of eight monthly meetings, some relatively large, some quite small. The quarter brings together friends from all 8 meetings 4 times a year in January, April, July and October for worship, a program (with programs for children as well!) and lunch (with a business meeting too). The quarterly meetings are hosted on a rotating basis at each of the monthly meetings. We are blessed in our Quarter with well-established meetings, each unique in its character.

The Quaker world is larger than our individual monthly meetings. If you have been called to work for which you have found limited support in

## Create a Bird-Friendly Habitat Today!



*-Goldfinches swaying on purple coneflowers, chirping, gobbling seeds.  
-robins gorging on bright red winterberries.  
-tiny warblers protected by the prickly leaves of an American holly.  
-blue jays nesting in an old oak tree.*

Would you like more visitors like these around your meetinghouse? Your meeting already may have features that provide food, water, and shelter that birds and other wildlife need. There are simple, rewarding steps your meeting can take to become certified as a bird-friendly place.

On April 5, PYM's Eco-Justice Collaborative and Concord Quarter's Climate Action Working Group will present Part II of their Greening Sacred Spaces series on how to become bird-friendly certified from National Audubon or become part of Doug Tallamy's Homegrown National Parks program. Register [here](#).

A key part of creating a bird-friendly space is ensuring there are plenty of native plants. Why are "native plants" important? The Backyards for Nature program of Valley Forge Audubon Society clarifies:

- Native plants are historic members of our local ecosystem.
- Native plants host native insects, the primary food of birds and many other species.
- The seeds, nuts, berries, and nectar of natives are digestible, nutritious, and well-timed for local wildlife unlike those of non-natives.
- Natives don't need fertilizers or extra water since they are adapted to local conditions.
- Pesticides aren't required since natives have defenses against indigenous insects.

Many of the plants and trees in our yards and public spaces are not native. While some are lovely, they don't provide the food birds need. A typical grass-covered lawn, with plants treated with fertilizers and pesticides, is no help to hungry birds and may kill the insects they need to survive.

To help make your meeting a safe haven for birds, see what plants are native in your area. The [Backyards for Nature](#) page includes a list of native

community sometime in April asking for feedback on the program's efficacy and viability. Responses will provide guidance on how to proceed.

The Meetings in our Quarter have different demographics but there does seem to be a concern with Friends stepping forward to serve in critical roles. Wilmington and Westtown have met this challenge in unique ways but both exhibit that Quaker knack for discernment that leads to ongoing care for their Meeting communities. - *Rich Ailes Middletown Meeting*

your local meeting, you are bound to find friends at the Quarter who have a similar interest. We have active working groups which are currently addressing climate action and aging concerns.

You can find friends at the Quarter who are at similar points in their life journey – whether with young children, experiencing the challenges of balancing roots and wings for teens, sending a child out into the world, balancing work and faith, and / or settling into a new period of life.

You and your family are invited to step just a little bit beyond your monthly meeting to experience the richness of being with other friends in the quarter. We know how important it is for children to develop a healthy network of peers – that need is also critical for adults!

You will find in this newsletter details about the April 23 Concord Quarterly meeting at West Chester Friends Meeting. There is a sleep-over planned for middle school aged friends, a morning program for young friends and a program for the rest of us on climate action. We are trying a new format with the program before worship and ending with a potluck!

Community is at the heart of our Quaker experience. We invite you to expand your Quaker circle and to branch out (just a little!) to join Quarterly Meeting! We are missing you!!!

P.S. Hybrid meeting for worship and business is here to stay BUT lunch is more fun in person!! - *Debbie Murray-Sheppard Wilmington Meeting & CQM Clerks*

plants for southeastern Pennsylvania, their benefits, and where you can buy them. Middletown Meeting recently allocated more than \$400 to buy plants from a local native plant supplier, [Redbud Native Plant Nursery](#). Choose plants that are likely to thrive in the soil, moisture, and sun/shade conditions you have. You don't need to get rid of the non-native plants you already have unless they are likely to crowd out your new plants.

For years, our yard in Swarthmore was dominated by non-native plants, including English ivy, hybrid roses, tulips, daffodils, oriental lilies, and trees, including crepe myrtle, Japanese maple, and Norway spruce. We did have old native oak, holly, and maple trees, as well as some native goldenrod, coneflowers, and black-eyed susans. Instead of trying to remove the non-natives, we planted new native shrubs and flowering plants in areas once covered with lawn.

In 1999, a member of Middletown Meeting raised money for our education fund by selling white oak seedlings for \$19.99; we planted one in our backyard and now, about 60 feet tall, it attracts chickadees, nuthatches, and many other birds. We also have planted winterberry bushes, a native azalea, milkweed, dill, and many native flowering plants. These plants attract and support bees and butterflies as well as birds. Now our yard has a sign that shows we meet Audubon bird-friendly certification standards.



In addition to planting native plants and reducing the amount of grass lawn, here are other ways to help birds thrive:

- Leave the leaves! Keep fallen leaves on the ground through the winter to provide cover for bugs that birds eat.
- If you don't have a stream or other water source on your property, consider setting up a bird bath and keeping it clean and filled.
- Create brush piles, including twigs and branches, to give birds such as Carolina wrens and song sparrows a place to hide from predators.
- Let fallen trees lie and keep snags standing as long as they don't endanger people or buildings. They provide food and shelter for woodpeckers and many other birds.

Enjoy the chirps, squawks, and trills as new birds discover the welcoming spaces you've created at your Meeting! – *Shirley Dodson – Middletown MM*

# Concord Quarter April 2023 Announcements & Calendar of Events

## Announcements

Draft minutes of our January 2023 Quarterly Meeting are on the website:

<https://concordquarter.org/documents/?category=Minutes>. Please send any comments to the Recording Clerk, Marty Boston, at mboston0916@gmail.com by April 18, 2023.

Request a Visit from PYM's Youth Programs Staff: <https://www.pym.org/youth-programs/visit-request-form/>  
Explore PYM's Calendar of Events: <https://www.pym.org/calendar/>

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/events/>

## Calendar of Events

- April 3**  
7:30 -  
9 pm  
**Pendle Hill presents The River of Life: We Are What We Have Been Becoming:** Pendle Hill's Friend-in-Residence Nim Njuguna shares a framework of personal exploration that has opened his eyes to the broader issues of social justice from a spiritually transformed mindset. Free to the public, registration is requested.  
<https://pendlehill.org/events/the-river-of-life-we-are-what-we-have-been-becoming/>
- April 4**  
2 pm  
**Emily Provance conducts a consultation on "The Life Cycle of Meetings" April series:** We'll do an overview of what's meant by the life cycle of meetings, and you'll hear a bit about what the various stages of the life cycle might be like. Session will also be held April 18 at 8 PM. For more info and to register:  
<https://www.pym.org/life-cycle-of-meetings-series/>
- April 4**  
7 pm  
**West Chester Area Refugee Resettlement Project:** We are considering sponsoring refugees again. The team—and anyone who might be interested in helping with this effort will meet via Zoom. All are welcome and encouraged to attend, even those not able to commit to volunteering. If you're interested, contact Susan Brodesser at be\_still@verizon.net for the Zoom link.
- April 5**  
10:45 am  
**Concord Quarter's Working Group on Aging Concerns via Zoom:** Meetings are open to anyone interested in aging concerns in the Quarter. Contact the Coordinator for more information and the Zoom link at concordquarter@pym.org <https://concordquarter.org/aging-concerns>
- April 5**  
7:00 -  
8:30 pm  
**Join PYM's Eco-Justice Collaborative and our Climate Action Working Group :** Homegrown National Parks and the Audubon Bird Friendly Certification - on Zoom. Part II of the Greening Sacred Spaces series. For more info and to register go here: <https://concordquarter.org/climate-action/2023/part2-greening-sacred-spaces-certs>
- April 6**  
12:00 -  
1:00 pm  
**Earth Quaker Action Team (EQAT) Spiritual Preparation Session for Vanguard SOS action:** These prep sessions will be held April 6 (12-1 pm), April 12 (12-1 pm), & April 16 (5-6 pm). More info and to RSVP go here: <https://www.eqat.org>
- Apr 22-23**  
overnight  
**Middle School Friends Spring Overnight at West Chester Meeting:** PYM friends in grades 5 to 8 are invited to join us for a fun-filled overnight at West Chester Meeting. We will explore themes of sustainability, learn about our planet, and our place in the world. Scholarship funding available.  
Please go here to register: <https://www.pym.org/event/middle-school-friends-spring-overnight/>
- April 23**  
8:30 am to  
12 pm  
**Concord Quarterly Meeting Program via Zoom & in person at West Chester Meeting:** Matt Zencey from the Chester County Chapter of the Citizens Climate Lobby to speak on actions Friends can take effective action on the concern for climate change. Children's Program (pre-school to 4th grade) during Sunday Morning Adult Program: Godly Play story "Creation" and a celebration of the Earth with Melinda Wenner Bradley. Note: Quarterly Meeting for Business will be held on April 30. <https://concordquarter.org/nextqm-pastqm/2023/qm-at-westchester>
- April 30**  
1-3 pm  
**Concord Quarter Planning Committee and Meeting for Business via Zoom and in person at West Chester Meeting:** 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.
- May 3**  
10:45 am  
**CQ Working Group on Aging Concerns:** Open to anyone interested in aging concerns. For more info and to register email: concordquarter@pym.org or evelynlbrownlee@gmail.com
- May 4**  
9:15 am to  
12:15 pm  
**Delaware Valley Friends School Care Committee Meeting:** In person at DVFS and ZOOM. Those attending in person will join Meeting For Worship at 9:15AM and then Meet as a Committee for Business. To join the committee in person or via ZOOM email: Susan Brodesser (be\_still@verizon.net)

# Concord Quarterly Meeting April 23, 2023 – West Chester Meeting



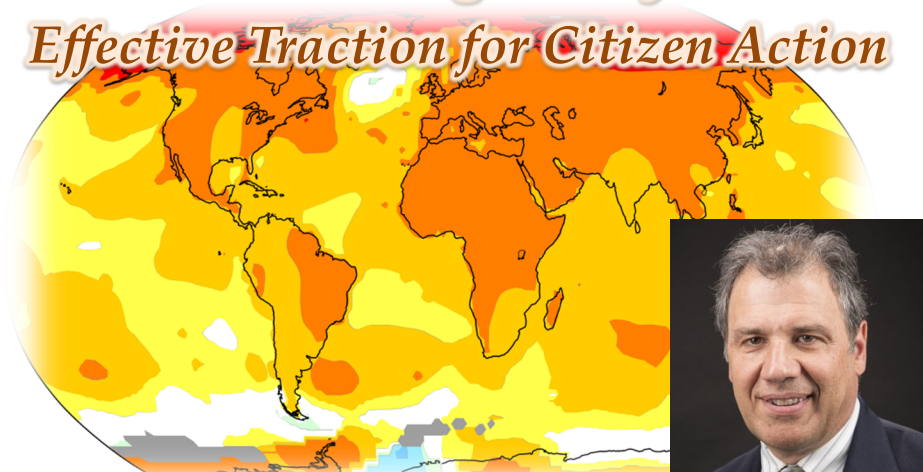
Zoom Session and In Person

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/582447487>

Important Note: In an experiment to make Quarterly Meeting more accessible, we will be holding QM Meeting for Business on April 30 at 1 PM via Zoom and in person at West Chester Meeting

8:30 - 9:00 am	Coffee and Refreshments
9:00 -10:15	Program: Matt Zencey from the Chester County Chapter of the Citizens Climate Lobby.
9:00 -10:15	Children's Program: <i>Godly Play</i> story "Creation" and a celebration of the Earth
10:15 -10:30	Break
10:30-11:30	Meeting for Worship
12:00 pm	Potluck Lunch (all invited – please bring a dish to share)

## *The Climate Change Lobby: Effective Traction for Citizen Action*



Matt Zencey, a retired journalist, author and president of the West Chester Unitarian Universalist congregation, will join us in his capacity as a lead spokesperson for the Chester County Chapter of the Citizens Climate Lobby. Matt will involve both adults and youth in a discussion of efforts to reduce carbon at the national and global levels as well as other conservation efforts that can be implemented at all levels of our communities. Friends will learn how to participate effectively in local and national efforts and also leave with links to and information about things they can do to preserve the planet.

The [Citizens Climate Lobby](#) was formed as a bi-partisan group in 2007 and now has grown into a global organization responsible for climate initiatives in many countries. The group has worked to gain bi-partisan sponsorship of a bill in the U.S. House of Representatives to create a carbon fee that will reduce carbon emissions and cover costs by returning dollars collected to all American taxpayers.

**For Children & Youth:** PYM friends in grades 5 to 8 are invited to join us for a fun-filled overnight (April 22) at West Chester Friends Meeting. We will explore themes of sustainability and learn about our planet and our place in the world by growing our connection with each other and the land. Middle school friends who attend this gathering will have the opportunity to build connections with plenty of fun activities: board games, outdoor games, and potting some plants to take home! Bring a friend! Event cost is \$20/person. ***There is scholarship funding available*** – see registration form for more information. Please go here to register: <https://www.pym.org/event/middle-school-friends-spring-overnight/>

**Children's Program (pre-school to 4<sup>th</sup> grade)** during Sunday Morning Adult Program: *Godly Play* story "Creation" and a celebration of the Earth with Melinda Wenner Bradley. Older youth are encouraged to attend the main program

For more info go to <https://concordquarter.org/nextqm-pastqm/2023/qm-at-westchester>  
You can also email at [concordquarter@pym.org](mailto:concordquarter@pym.org) or call 610-299-8992 and leave a message.  
<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/582447487> or (646) 558-8656 Meeting ID: 582 447 487 Password: Friends  
425 North High Street - West Chester, PA 19380

## Concord Quarterly Meeting - January 22, 2023 – Goshen via Zoom - Minutes

**Opening Worship** - The Clerk opened the Meeting with silent worship.

**Welcome to Newcomers** - **Debbie Murray-Sheppard (Clerk)** Debbie asked newcomers to Quarterly Meeting to introduce themselves. There were no newcomers. Debbie welcomed Gray Goodman from Delaware Valley Friends School who was present to give a report about the school.

**Monthly Meeting Count (Birmingham, Concord, Goshen, Middletown, West Chester, Westtown, Willistown, Wilmington)** Twenty-three people were present at the beginning of the meeting. All Meetings from the Quarter were represented.

**Approval of Agenda** The group approved the agenda as written, but later during the meeting added a report by Paula Kline from the Concord Quarter Climate Action Working Group.

**Approval of Minutes from October 23, 2022** The minutes from October were approved with some minor changes and will be resent to the Concord Quarter Coordinator for the record.

**Joys and Challenges Report: Wilmington (attached)** Pam Cerchio from Wilmington Meeting gave their Joys and Challenges Report. Pam said the Meeting feels good about recently updating the programming space for the Meeting's children and youth. She was happy to announce that Wilmington Friend's Meeting has a new First Day School Coordinator. An ongoing challenge has been that a few people do much of the volunteer work for the Meeting.

A friend asked if Friends from Wilmington Friend's Meeting worship with the preparative meeting at Appoquinimink. Pam affirmed that they do worship together at times. Pam explained that Appoquinimink Friend's Meeting is open for worship for the first and third Sundays of the month during much of the year and everyone is invited to attend. Appoquinimink Friend's Meeting is open less frequently during the summer months.

Wilmington Friend's Meeting has been sharing clerking duties among three Friends. Someone asked about how sharing the clerking duties among three Friends has been working. Pam Cerchio, Evelyn Brownlee, and others who have served as co-clerks said that this arrangement has continued to work well. In answer to another question, Pam reported that the co-clerks also sit on other Meeting committees. She said an additional benefit of having co-clerks is that experienced clerks can serve as mentors for younger members from the meeting. Friends accepted the report with gratitude and held Wilmington Meeting in the Light.

**Annual Report: Delaware Valley Friends School (attached)** Gray Goodman gave the Delaware Valley Friends School Report. Enrollment at the school has increased. Two million dollars from the State of Pennsylvania will help with storm water management and updating the building. The school is doing a self-study in preparation for accreditation. The Care Committee continues to meet three times a year. Susan Brodesser, the clerk of the Care Committee, has helped with a training for student leaders in leading worship sharing groups. The school uses high school students as mentors for younger students. The students went to the United Nations and met with the FWCC Quaker United Nations Organization (QUNO).

A question was asked about morning meeting. Grey explained that the all the students meet together each morning with silent worship. Seniors sit on the facing benches and serve as models for the younger students.

Another question was asked about the school's current building. Gray explained that the Coltman family helped provide funding for the school's current building in memory of their daughter Pam who was killed in a car accident. Susan Brodesser reminded that the Care Committee is open to anyone who is interested. The next Care Committee meeting is on May 4<sup>th</sup>. An announcement about the time and place for the meeting will come out with announcements from the Quarter. Friends accepted the report with gratitude and held the school in the Light.

**Treasurer's Report (attached)** Charles Spadoni reviewed the Treasurer's Report for July 1 - December 31, 2022. Charlie removed some investments from Friend's Fiduciary Short-term Fund due to stock market fluctuations. The funds have been placed in a CD and in a money market fund at the National Bank of Malvern.

All meetings from Concord Quarter have met their financial commitments to the Quarter for the year. Because of changes in the stock market our investments are down. Paul Kaniefski from Birmingham Monthly Meeting and Tom Gilbert from Willistown Monthly Meeting are doing a friendly financial review. Friends thanked Charlie for all his work on behalf of the Quarter.

**Nominating Committee Report** Rich Ailes, the new clerk for the Nominating Committee, gave a report. The group is looking for a Clerk, an Assistant Clerk, and a Recording Secretary with terms beginning July 2023. Chris McKenney expressed how much he has enjoyed working with the Quarter and encouraged Friends to consider serving in one of these positions.

**Working Group on Aging Concerns (attached)** Evelyn Brownlee gave the report from the CQ Working Group on Aging Concerns. On February 9<sup>th</sup> from 6:30-8:30 PM PYM is sponsoring a workshop on Spiritually and Aging presented by ARCH of NYYM. The registration link is listed in the announcements. Evelyn encouraged Friends to attend the program and to share this information with their respective meetings.

**Coordinator Report (attached)** Bianca, Coordinator for Concord Quarter, gave an update of her activities since the last Quarterly Meeting.

**Sharing Around the Quarter:** The Clerk asked Friends for news from the eight meetings in the Quarter. Debbie asked everyone in attendance to go back to their meetings to talk about the relevance of the Quarter and to get at least two people from each meeting to attend the Quarterly Planning Committee. The next meeting of the Planning Committee will be January 29<sup>th</sup> via Zoom at 1 PM.

**Climate Action Working Group** Concord Quarter Climate Action Working Group completed their work for this year and the full report is available on the Concord Quarter Website. For 2023 the group will look at land stewardship and building stewardship. The Climate Action Working Group is looking for members and a new coordinator as Paula will be stepping down as Coordinator.

**Reading of Minutes for Approval** There were no items for approval today. Rich Ailes stepped forward as Nominating Committee Clerk.

**Second Count of Meetings in Attendance** At the end of the Meeting, all meetings from the Quarter were represented.

**Next Quarterly Meeting: April 23, 2022, at West Chester Monthly Meeting. The Planning Committee will meet January 29<sup>th</sup> at 2:30 PM. Birmingham will be sharing Joys and Challenges.**

## REPORTS

### Delaware Valley Friends School Annual Report - 1/22/2023

DVFriends is pleased to report back to Concord Quarterly Meeting the current state of affairs at our school as of January 2023.

**General Enrollment/Growth Update** - DVFriends now has enrolled 223 students in grades 1-12, which is the same number that we had in April of 2022 and remains an all-time high for the school. We currently have 134 students enrolled in Upper School, 56 enrolled in Middle School, and 33 enrolled in our Lower

School. Our latest enrollment projections suggest that we will see modest growth in enrollment next year, with total enrollment likely still in the 220's. This pairs well with our existing space in our school, which is quite full.

**Master Planning Update** - Last year we reported that we were entering the first phase of our master planning. We are now well into that campaign, Transforming Futures. In November 2022 we released to the community that DV Friends received a \$2.5 million dollar grant from the PA Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program (RACP). This is the largest grant awarded to DV in its history, and the grant will be used to fund our upcoming campus renovations, expansion, and stormwater management projects. DV has raised an additional 2.5 million dollars from donors, allowing us to meet our goal in moving forward with the first phase of the master planning process, which is expected to cost over 9 million dollars. Phase 1 will include new stormwater management, which alone will cost over 2 million dollars but which will significantly help reduce stormwater runoff in the surrounding community. In addition, DV has plans for a new beautiful, centrally located and more accessible entrance, a few new classrooms including a new pottery and studio arts classroom, several new offices, a bigger and updated cafe with a full functioning kitchen (which currently does not exist), and a new patio outdoor space. These renovations are needed updates which will allow us to accommodate future increasing enrollment. It is indeed an exciting time for DV!

#### **PAIS Self-Study Update**

This year, DV is undergoing its 10-year self-study process required by the Pennsylvania Association of Independent Schools (PAIS) for accreditation. This is an all-hands-on-deck process that will last all year, in preparation for a PAIS Visiting Team's arrival in February 2024. Many of our all-staff meetings have been dedicated to completing the self-study; the work is done in various ad-hoc committees that cover all aspects of the school (ex: Governance, Program, Mission, etc.). Of note to the Quarter: there is a section of the self-study that is dedicated specifically to examining how we live up to our mission as a Quaker school.

**Care Committee Update** - The Care Committee continues to meet several times a year usually on Monday afternoons, mostly by Zoom. However, there is a plan for our next meeting to be hybrid (in person and via Zoom). This will happen on January 12th so that members of the Quarter may also attend DV's Meeting for Worship scheduled for that day. These care meetings are an important flow of information and dialogue between DV Friends and Concord Quarter.

**Revised Quaker Life and Student Life Update** - This is the first year in the shift of our Board's Quaker Life Committee from essentially report-outs from our student government leaders to more of a focus on queries. Our high school leaders (referred to as Peer Connectors), with assistance from the faculty advisors Gray Goodman and Allison Gill, created and executed our first worship sharing of the year in December with a focus on gratitude. Many thanks to Susan Brodesser, who provided some training via Zoom for our student leaders in preparation for clerking the worship sharing groups. The worship sharing process and experience was successful for a number of reasons. First, since it has been several years since DV has held regular worship sharing (in no small part due to the pandemic), it was a win to bring this important practice back into the fold. Also, we now have a group of high school student leaders who are prepped to facilitate future worship sharing events. And this provided a time for some of our upper school leaders to connect with middle school students as clerks of their worship sharing events. Finally, it proved to be a meaningful experience for many of our students, who were sincere in sharing their thoughts on gratitude.

The high school co-clerks of Community Government continue to lead face-to-face daily Gathering and announcements for middle and high school students, joined on Thursdays by the lower school. During our community time, clubs and committees meet during middle and upper school. Eye to Eye, a mentoring program between Upper and Lower School students, is yet another way that we try to maintain community across all three school divisions. Student trips and social events are happening as they have in the past, with two notable weekend ski trips in the works. Overall, student life at DV is vibrant after a season heavily impacted by Covid

**Wilmington Joys & Challenges Report 1/22/2023** - Prepared by Meeting Clerks: Debbie Fetzer, Evelyn Brownlee, Pam Cerchio

#### **Joys:**

- Active First Day School, with new families taking part
- Hiring a new Religious Education Coordinator
- Completion of nursery renovations and FDS garden upgrades
- Reconnection with members who had been inactive for awhile
- More frequent visitors at meeting for worship
- Meeting's commitment to using \$100,000 to support our neighboring community. (Peace & Social Justice committee working on a proposal for some of the funds)
- Adult FDS (recently renamed Quaker Conversations) monthly gatherings, which provide opportunity to explore Quakerism and get to know each other on a deeper spiritual level
- Revival of social time after worship, potlucks, and annual pancake breakfast
- Improvements in our technology in support of both in-person and Zoom worship. (We are grateful to be able to worship virtually with Friends from afar, as well as those nearby who are unable to come the meeting house.)

#### **Challenges:**

- Addressing the future of Appoquinimink Preparative Meeting in Odessa, which is under our care (An ad hoc committee is currently discussing areas such as low attendance, frequency of meetings for worship, creating a greater sense of community.)
- Getting the work of the Meeting done with a small number of active members, many of whom are older
- Mentoring younger members so they feel prepared to take on leadership roles
- Attracting younger and more diverse people to the meeting
- Rekindling our communication/interaction with Wilmington Friends School
- Addressing age gap in FDS (young elementary children/upper middle school kids. We want to keep older FDS kids involved)

#### **Joys/Challenges:**

- Continuing relationship with Family Promise and Emmanuel Dining Room/finding volunteers to do the work
- Committees continue to accomplish much/some committees have members who don't participate (people agree to serve but don't fulfill their responsibilities), so the work must be done by two or three.

**Working Group on Aging Concerns Report 1/22/2023** - The Working Group on Aging Concerns continues to meet monthly to discuss topics of interest to aging Friends and their families. Meetings are via Zoom technology. The group discussed having a workshop on Spirituality and Aging, gathering ideas for speakers and topics to cover. However, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting has taken over the planning and a Spirituality and Aging Workshop, led by ARCH (New York Yearly Meeting) will be held virtually on February 9, 2023, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Additional information will be forthcoming from Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. - Evelyn Brownlee, Clerk WGAC For more information contact the clerk, Evelyn Brownlee: [evelynbrownlee@gmail.com](mailto:evelynbrownlee@gmail.com) or visit <http://concordquarter.org/aging-concerns>

**Editor's Note: Minutes here are abridged. To read Coordinator's report and a redacted Treasurer's report go to <https://concordquarter.org/documents/?category=Minutes>** For unredacted Treasurer's report please email [concordquarter@pym.org](mailto:concordquarter@pym.org)

**Concord Quarterly Meeting Newsletter**  
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**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

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