

The Langley Hill Friend

FIFTH MONTH 2014

#509

*Indeed it is an hard matter either to speak the word of the Lord, or to hear the word of the Lord. A man may easily speak what he invents, and another may easily hear and judge of such words; but to speak the word of life, requires the tongue of the learned in the language of God's Spirit; and to hear the word of life, requires a quickened ear; and to know the times and seasons of the Spirit, requires both being begotten of the Spirit, and being acquainted with it." — Isaac Penington (fl. 1658-1679), *Concerning the worship of the Living God, which He Teacheth Israel, His People...**

Calendar

Recurring Events

- Sundays 9 am "Drop-in" Worship Sharing in the upstairs room
- 9:30 am Early worship in the meeting room
- 10 am Meeting for worship (9:30 on business meeting day)
- First Sundays 9:15 Singing ♪♪ 10:00 Worship. 11:00 Fellowship. Noon Potluck Lunch.
- Second Sunday 10:30-12:00 Meeting for worship with a concern for Business
- Second Tuesday 7:30-8:30 Mid-Week Worship
- Third Sunday 7:00-9 pm Adult Discussion
- Saturday 12-1 pm Witness on Mall "Seek Peace and Pursue It" (Contact Bill Mims 703-281-7293)

Upcoming Events at Langley Hill – and Elsewhere

- Sunday 5/25 2nd hour: Tory Smith on AFSC and BDS
- 5/30 - 6/1 BYM Silent Retreat at Dayspring
- Saturday 6/7 Strawberry Festival at Adelphi Meeting, see next page.
- Sunday 6/8 10:30 Meeting for Worship with concern for Business
- Sunday 6/15 2nd hour: Networking. light lunch provided , see next page.
- Saturday 6/21 Interim Meeting
- Sunday 6/22 2nd hour: Introduction to New Library System
- 12p Peace & International Outreach Committee mtg in gathering/library room
- 12p Racism Working Group Meeting - upstairs
- Su-Sa 6/29-7/5 Friends General Conference
- Tu-Sun 8/5-10 Baltimore Yearly Meeting Annual Sessions



New college grads
join us to explore
career possibilities
with the meeting
community.

To schedule Second Hours contact Jeanne Houghton 703-609-1065 seacairn@comcast.net
To schedule use of the Meeting House contact Sheila Bach 304-728-4820 snbach@earthlink.net

Pass the Torch at this Year's Networking Meet-Up!

Join the fun & pass the torch! On Sunday, June 16th, LHMf will again be offering a helping hand to new graduates, interns and young people in career transition in the DC area.

This year we will be focusing on those seeking careers opportunities in peace and social justice work, international development and relief work, and general human rights work. We will be hosting this "no-sweat" networking event to help connect our young visitors with contacts we have that can help them jump-start their career. Of course, with young visitors in our midst, a good potluck brunch is planned. Join us and share your contacts with our guests and/or bring finger-food style brunch food. If you have a good network of contacts you'd be interested in sharing, contact Jeannette Smith (Jeannette53@gmail.com) and let her know which professional arenas you have contacts in. She'll make sure our young visitors can connect with you easily. Feel free to bring a friend who works in any of these arenas who could share contacts that might just make a difference in the career plans of our young friends.

The networking begins after Meeting for Worship and brief introductions, at 11:00. Help connect our young visitors with the career break they have been working for!

Awards for *Yeshu*

Chuck Kleymeyer's book, *YESHU: A Novel for the Open Hearted*, recently won two national fiction awards — Printed Book Fiction and eBook Fiction — from the Associated Church Press, a large network of publishers, including the *Christian Science Monitor*, *Sojourners Magazine*, and *Friends Journal*. Chuck traveled to Chicago to receive the two awards at a banquet. Proceeds from *YESHU* are being shared with seven Quaker organizations. Learn more at www.YeshuNovel.org.

New! Fauquier Friends Worship Group

Friends in the Fauquier/Culpeper area of Virginia are joyfully welcoming the startup of a new unprogrammed worship group, meeting in Fauquier County's 19th century "Bealeton Depot" one Sunday a month as allowed.

Dates scheduled so far: May 18, June 15, July 20, singing at 10:30am, Worship at 11, First Day activity for children 11:15, Discussion and Worship-Sharing hour on "Letting Our Lives Speak" at 1pm.

Visit www.bym-rsf.org, "Who We Are", Virginia Meetings for more info and future dates for **Fauquier Friends Worship Group**. Email fauquierfriends@gmail.com or call Herndon Friends Meeting at [\(703\) 736-0592](tel:7037360592).

Visit if you can to help us grow in the Light.

Bonnie Stockslager, Convener

Strawberry Festival

at Adelphi

On Saturday, June 7, Adelphi Friends Meeting will hold its annual Strawberry Festival from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., at 2303 Metzert Road in Adelphi, Maryland (between Riggs Road and Adelphi Road).

The Strawberry Festival is a long-standing community event and day of fun for the whole family. The Festival added a live-entertainment stage and outdoor grilled-food tent last year, and these will continue along with the indoor cafe and sale of quarts and flats of just-picked strawberries from Oak Grove Farm in southern Pennsylvania. The large rummage sale also continues, with additional areas for silent auction, clothing, plants, and a full room of used books.

Children's activities include train rides, face painting, and a moonbounce. Come for the fun and leave with great bargain purchases of clothes, electronics, books, and more. Join us as we celebrate the abundance of summer and the richness of our community! The Strawberry Festival is a rain or shine event.

For more information see adelphifriends.org or email John Stith at john.stith@gmail.com.

May Business Meeting Notes

From May 11 –

Two **letters** reported, one from Dona Manoukian about her visit to Cuba, and one from Peggy Yocom requesting transfer of membership from Langley Hill to Farmington ME, where she and John Slack (married under the care of this meeting) will be moving soon.

Recommended for the **Nominating Committee**: Jim Laity, Bill Mims, Lauren Stockbower, Donna Williams (clerk). Request for approval in June.

Drone minute proposed by Peace and International Outreach. Friends discussed this minute at length, setting aside for now what actions we might take as public witness.

Langley Hill Friends Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) is deeply concerned about the proliferation of lethal unmanned aerial vehicles, commonly known as drones. Out witness against war and other means of violence began over 350 years ago. Quakers emerged in England at a time of unrest, executions and civil war. Yet in the midst of this violence our forebears declared, "Our principle is, and our practices have always been, to seek peace and ensue [pursue] it and to follow after righteousness and the knowledge of God, seeking the good and welfare and doing that which tends to the peace of all." As the inheritors of their witness for peace and the common good, our members have participated in the monthly Anti-Drove Vigils, which began over a year ago, at the gates of the Central Intelligence Agency.

We protest the policies of our government, in which the United States is leading the way in drone warfare. With this new technology "pilots" in U.S. Bases kill people who are thousands of miles away, by remote control. Drones have become the preferred weapons to conduct war because they minimize the risk to U.S. Troops. However, these drone strikes have led to the death of

hundreds of innocent civilians, in countries where we are not at war, such as Pakistan, Yemen, and Somalia. We urge our government to put an end to this secretive, remote-controlled killing and instead promote foreign policies that are consistent with the values of a democratic and humane society. We call on the United Nations to ban the international use of lethal drones.

Here's a summary of the discussion: As friends we oppose war and all violence. In this context, we oppose use of drones for military purposes because (1) they damage civilians as well as their intended target, (2) pilots who control them are not physically damaged but suffer PTSD at a higher rate than other military personnel and (3) in spite of their causing less damage than some other weapon systems, that doesn't make us approve of them. We do not oppose use of drones for constructive domestic purposes, but question whether in some cases, as in helping to find the kidnapped girls in Nigeria, their use may become more destructive than helpful. But, again, our main protest is against all war and violence, this being just one instance of a specific weapon. FCNL continues to discuss this at length, as do other meetings.

The Committee will bring a revised minute for consideration at the June business meeting.

Sabeel, a Palestinian Christian group, has asked to use our meeting house for a study group on "Zionism Unsettled". We approved.

Chesapeake Yearly Meeting? After some discussion, friends agreed to have Sheila Bach's proposal (see April newsletter) to change BYM's name to Chesapeake YM sent on to the Yearly Meeting, for consideration at Annual Sessions in August.

Financial Report. The Meeting now has 95 donating units (family or individual), 5 more than last year. With average contribution of \$102 per month. Even as we get older, we do have wide

support, and probably capacity to five more. Note the description of a proposed outreach and communication coordinator, page ___ in this newsletter. A number of clerks said position like this might be useful. Because it's under consideration, there's a placeholder for compensating that person in the budget.

Budget Notes: Our expected total contributions go from 106,000 to 133,000. Many autogive amounts have gone up. Non-autogive is a plug-in. Under Meeting house, the internet service line item has been combined with phone, security etc. Under maintenance, \$6,300 relates to ongoing septic system work. Snow removal bill hasn't arrived yet. There are two placeholder amounts, one for a proposed meeting coordinator (including payroll taxes) and the other for an R.E. Coordinator. These might be combined. Committees always get a designated amount but often don't use it. Bookkeeper Jim Laity should know of any kind contributions or in-kind donations. Finance Committee recommends an increase of \$7,500 to the three groups of Quaker agencies. Social Concerns and Peace & International Outreach amounts not yet determined. Budget goes up in total from \$133,00 to \$142,000. This budget lies over until the June business meeting for approval. Ask either Tim Hunt or Jeannette about the meeting coordinator position.

From May 18 –

The **Library Committee** gave their annual report. See next page.

Care and Clearness has been trying for a year and a half to contact missing/lost Meeting members, using every possible means. Result: 3 members requested transfers, 18 members want to stay connected, 9 said they'd resigned membership some time ago, 7 wanted to resign membership, and several have died. Per our earlier minute on Junior Membership, those now over 30 have been removed from the rolls. Efforts are being made, however, to contact

those over 18 about their interest in staying connected with Langley Hill. Note that BYM assessment is based on number of giving units, not individuals. Note: Our BYM assessment depends on contributing family units, not membership. These are 11 we haven't been able to reach: Donald Bell

*William Emerson
Amy Griffin
*Lawrence & Elizabeth Howe
Bonnie Binns Mattheus
Felicia Mostofi
Wendy Nirenberg
Sean O'Neill
*Patricia Stroud
Annell Bond Wattecamp

After much discussion the 1996 minute on removing friends from membership rolls was revised to read thus:

Individuals who return to the Meeting after having been removed from our membership rolls because we have lost contact with them will be welcomed back to the Meeting community and may be restored to membership without going through the clearness process. Friends approved. Questions? Ask Tim Hunt or anyone on Care & Clearness.

New group to use the meeting house. The Encouraging Word Fellowship, (formerly the Open Church of Jesus Christ), has asked to use the meetinghouse for a group of adult victims of sexual or emotional abuse, led by a professional counselor. They've asked for Wednesday evenings but that may be changed. Donation is asked for outside groups who use the meeting house. Friends Approved.

The **Scholarship Committee**, formerly 3 separate committees, reported giving 4 camping scholarships and 3 Quaker Leadership grants, and are in the process of contacting students who've requested loans. Expect full committee report in the fall.

Library Committee Annual Report March 2013 – March 2014

The LHFM Library Committee continues to meet monthly for a discussion of committee business and a working session.

This year we have recategorized the entire library collection according to our new system. All materials have now been relabeled and shelved according to the new categories. Committee members have devoted many hours to this project. We are planning a second hour to acquaint library users with the new system. We hope that it will be much easier for library users to find books with categories designed for our collection. The second hour is scheduled for June 22.

Our new system has categories that are color coded, prominently labeled and easy to understand, such as “Newcomers, Quaker Studies, Quaker Testimonies, Christian Religions and Bible Study, World Religions, Life Transitions, Spirituality as well as Fiction, Children’s and Young Adult books.” Special collections, such as “End of Life Matters, Racism and Peace Committee Materials” can be found together within one of the new categories and can be located easily.

A welcome new addition to the library services is the electronic cataloging of our entire collection on a free website call “Library Thing” (librarything.com, ID: lhfm, password: inthelight). This website allows anyone to access the catalog of the LHFM library collec-

tion online. So, if a person is wondering if the LHFM Library has a certain book, he or she can use the website to find out. The cataloging is almost complete, so folks can have a look at the collection already.

In addition, during the past summer, the committee held a used book sale. It was quite a success and provided many opportunities for browsing and fellowship. The sale raised over \$340. We donated \$100 each to the MonteVerde Friends School in Costa Rica and to the Reading Connection in Arlington, a program that provides books and reading aloud to low-income children. The balance of the book sale proceeds was donated to the meeting to help defray the cost of library activities.

We periodically reconsider how best to organize, display and label materials in our new space. We continue to take stock of the current collection and consider what we should keep, add and remove. We welcome ideas and feedback from others in the meeting about these issues. We hope to continue to work with others in the Meeting to develop ways to make the library welcoming and useful to all, as way opens.

Respectfully submitted,
Ann L. Stone, Clerk, Library Committee

Am I aware that the ways in which I choose to use my time, my possessions, my money, and my energy affect my most deeply held values? How do we support each other in our search for a simple life?

BYM Faith and Practice draft 2011

Marriage Equality

Our belief in that of God in every person embraces all human beings. In 1991, Langley Hill Friends Meeting adopted a minute affirming our welcome to all people, regardless of sexual orientation. Among other things, this minute states that Langley Hill will conduct weddings in the manner of Friends for all couples. We reaffirm this commitment.

The Commonwealth of Virginia currently defines marriage as between a man and a woman. This means that a loving couple of the same sex married in the manner of Friends at Langley Hill Meeting will be denied the legal benefits which the state provides to married heterosexual couples.

This infringes on the free exercise of our religious beliefs. We are a faith community in which performing and supporting marriages is a part of our faith and witness. When a couple is denied the legal benefits associated with marriage, the Meeting is denied the ability to fully support marriages consistent with our faith and religious beliefs.

We do not wish to compel other faiths to conform their religious beliefs to ours, but we assert our right to freely perform our religious services, including weddings, consistent with our faith and religious beliefs.

We recommit our efforts to ensure marriage equality for all loving couples.

We urge our public officials to support changes to Virginia's marriage laws to ensure that they no longer infringe on our religious freedom.

[adopted month/day/year]

Langley Hill Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)
McLean, Virginia

Social Concerns
Committee
revised minute
for consideration
at the June 8th
Business Meeting

For Reference

Langley Hill Minute 1991

We affirm our belief in that of God in every person embraces all human beings, so that we welcome to meetings for worship, to fellowship and to consideration for membership all persons, without consideration of sexual orientation. The Meeting extends its loving care to all members and attenders. Some forms of this care include counseling and clearness committees for individuals, couples and families, and providing for marriages and commitment ceremonies in the manner of Friends.

Langley Hill Minute, June 2006

06 - 11: Social Concerns Committee: Letter concerning same-sex unions in Virginia — Clerk Barbara Williams brought a revised letter that the committee proposes to send to members of the Virginia legislature serving on the appropriate committee expressing our opposition to a proposed amendment to the state's constitution that would outlaw civil unions other than marriage between one man and one woman. After further revision, the Meeting APPROVED the following letter to be sent on our behalf:

As members of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers),

we have a strong commitment to family values. We support loving families led by committed adults.

There are already two Virginia statues restricting marriage to heterosexual couples (1986) and prohibiting civil union (2004). These laws significantly limit the definitions of marriage and civil union.

A constitution amendment limiting the definition of marriage would be contrary to the spirit of the Bill of Rights of the Constitution of Virginia, specifically Section 1, Equality of Rights of Men. Virginia has historically extended these constitutional rights to ever more of her citizens. Reversal of this trend would have tragic consequences.

The proposed amendment would further restrict the rights of adults who are not married. Such restrictions would undermine many loving and stable homes. They would also erode the health and finances of many contributing members of our society and of their children.

We oppose the proposed amendment to the Constitution of Virginia that would limit marriage or civil union.

Planning for and Coping with Decline and Death

The Committee for Care and Clearness announces the electronic publication of an updated version of our packet Planning for and Coping with Decline and Death. The packet offers practical and spiritual advice on how to prepare for your own death, how to care for and support loved ones as they approach death or become dependent on others for caregiving, and how to cope with a loved one's death.

This packet is the latest, substantially expanded version of materials Langley Hill has been preparing every few years since 1979 to assist attenders and others facing end of life challenges. These new materials are divided into three parts:

1. **Planning: *Do It Now!*** is designed to help each of us plan for and communicate how we would like to be treated as we approach death. Information forms that will help your survivors at the time of your death, as well as local official *advance directive* forms, accompany this document.
2. **Decline, Approaching Death, & Dying: *Ways to Meet Challenges*** deals with establishing networks of support for loved ones who can no longer care for themselves and for their caregivers, helping people who are approaching death, and caring for another's property. Local official forms for *general powers of attorney* to take care of another's property accompany this document.
3. **Death:** Help for Survivors offers guidance and advice to cope with our own and others' grief when someone close to us dies, as well as other spiritual, practical, and property-related aspects of recovering from a death. A useful *checklist for survivors* accompanies this document.

Within the next few months, we will be posting

the packet's materials on the Meeting's public website, www.quaker.org/langleyhill, where it can be downloaded in whole or in part, as needed. Until then you can get either the whole file or any of the three parts described above directly from John Surr at jsurr@verizon.net. The Committee for Care and Clearness will also publish a number of copies of the full packet in loose-leaf binders for people who prefer that form of access. We will ask for a \$15 donation for each binder to cover the cost of printing and assembly. If you are interested in having one of these printed packets, please contact John Surr, jsurr@verizon.net.

There will be 25 copies in the first printing, and looseleaf supplements may be published from time to time to reflect significant changes in legal provisions or our advice. Your own suggestions about the resources cited or the need for additional resources or other information will be welcome, addressed to John Surr.

The packet joins other resources about decline and death in the Meeting's Library that are available for consultation and check-out by attenders. The contents of the packet are not copyrighted, and may be duplicated for others to use.

Members of the Committee for Care and Clearness are also available to help friends address individual concerns about decline and death, including, if needed, the resources of the Meeting's Family Emergency Fund. Please contact a member of the Committee to raise such concerns.

Committee: Tim Yeaney, clerk, Kate English, K.C. Morris, Suzanne Nicholson, Rebecca Rawls, Paul Slattery, John d, John Surr, Steve Woodbury



General Responsibilities of Proposed Outreach and Communication Coordinator

Communications - 2 hrs per week

- website content support including posting and maintaining “fresh” look
- advertising/promoting events inside and outside the Meeting
- updating list serve and mailing lists with new subscribers/newcomers
- assist with newsletter content with outreach focus

Outreach – 2 hr per week

- assist members of Committees with organizing outreach events
- facilitating and coordinating outreach activities especially with new families

Coordination – 1 hr per week

- facilitating exchange of information amongst committees and clerks to improve communication and coordination
- follow through on tasks related to outreach and communication
- attend select committee meeting when needed (only occasionally)

Total Cost – 5 hrs per week: 260 hrs x \$20 (?) = **\$5,200**

Oversight of Coordinator: Clerks of A&O, Communication, and Meeting

- Provide guidance, track hours of work, authorize pay, and resolve questions of responsibility.

Next Steps:

- Seek support for Outreach and Communication Coordinator by Meeting
- Develop clear position description of coordinator’s tasks
- Establish clear boundaries between coordinator and existing committee responsibilities – the Coordinator is to SUPPLEMENT efforts and not replace the work of members on the committees
- Establish procedures to avoid mission creep for Coordinator – close oversight
- Clerks can authorize “overtime” (beyond the scope of work or beyond the 5 hour weekly average) if special needs arise and within budgets
- Invite members of LHFM to consider being the Coordinator

Langley Hill Contributors Profile April 2013 - March 2014

Quintile	Smallest	Largest	Subtotal	% of Total	Avg/Year	Avg/month	2014-15 Budget
Top	\$1,900	\$6,840	\$65,393	56%	\$3,442	\$287	
2nd	\$1,000	\$1,840	\$30,774	26%	\$1,338	\$112	
3rd	\$600	\$975	\$13,257	11%	\$803	\$67	
4th	\$200	\$540	\$5,540	5%	\$326	\$27	
Bottom	\$15	\$150	\$1,701	1%	\$90	\$7	
Overall	\$15	\$6,840	\$116,666	100%	\$1,228	\$102	\$117
							14%
Donating "units" 95							



The Night The Birds Screamed

©2014 by John LaTorre*



It was on a Friday evening that I heard a thousand birds screaming. Blinded by tear gas, they were screaming in pain and terror; their sightlessness prevented them from flying away, out of the toxic air. I could hear them, but I could not see them, because I was blind, too.

The place was somewhere in Washington, D.C. I can't remember exactly where now. In fact, I wasn't sure where I was at the time I was gassed, although it must have been within a few blocks of Dupont Circle, in the north-west quadrant of the city. There used to be slaughterhouses there in the nineteenth century. Now it is a gentrified neighborhood, with boutiques and coffeehouses and comfortable row houses. But on the night of November 14, 1969, it was not a good place to be.

The occasion was a massive protest against the Vietnam War, called the Moratorium March on Washington. The first Moratorium demonstration was a month before. It went peacefully enough, with no violence reported. Its success prompted a second, larger demonstration a month later. This time, people were expected to be coming in from all over the country, and its promoters had hopes that it would be as peaceful as the other demonstration. We hoped so, too.

By "we," I mean the Langley Hill Friends Meeting, a Quaker congregation I was worshiping with at the time. Our meeting house was open to those who wanted a place to stay during the demonstrations, and the basement had been converted into a sort of dormitory. Several anti-war groups had made contact with us to arrange for space. That Friday night, I was on hand to make coffee and soup, and to offer whatever I could in the way of support.

When I arrived at the meeting house, I immediately noticed a tension in the air. Several people were crowded around a television set, which was reporting riots in downtown Washington. According to the news reports, some of the protesters had attacked policemen and the policemen responded with

tear gas. "It looks like Chicago all over again," one person said. It might be worth explaining that he was referring to the demonstrations that were attacked by policemen at the Democratic national convention the year before, an action later referred to as a "police riot" by those who were there.

The phone rang and rang and rang. We were getting calls from some of the groups whom we were to host. They had been separated from their parties and were lost in an unfamiliar city. We decided to drive some of us who were somewhat familiar with the area into the city, where we would meet up with these groups and guide them home somehow. I was assigned to a group who said they had a van, but whose driver didn't know the area. I was given the name of an intersection to report to.

When we got there, the car I was riding in couldn't approach the corner where I was to find my group. The streets had been blocked off to traffic. They let me out as close as they could, and I proceeded on foot. When I got there, there was no van. There were only hordes of people running toward me. They were escaping a tear gas barrage a block away. When they got to my location again, the cops came and fired more tear gas canisters at us. It appeared that the cops had decided that the best way to control the crowd was to keep it moving and disorganized, and the best way to do that was to fire tear gas at anything that looked like a massing crowd. It was not the first time the location had been teargassed, I found out later; the first barrage had driven away the people I was supposed to rescue, and traffic barriers prevented them from returning once the gas had dispersed.

Well, I got gassed. I followed the crowd to another intersection and got gassed again. That was when I heard the birds screaming. By that time I was pretty much blind myself, so I was aware only of the vague shapes of trees and cars and people and such. I realized that the birds were in as much pain as I was, but their terror was compounded by the fact that they couldn't escape it. Because they were

** John LaTorre, a member of our Meeting during the 1960s, is writing a memoir that includes recollections of his time in Northern Virginia. He shared with us an excerpt that deals with how the Meeting sheltered protestors during the time of the anti-Vietnam war protests.*

blind, they couldn't fly. They could only cling to whatever perches they had found and scream in pain and fear and frustration. Thousands of them. This was not birdsong, but a relentless howl of noise that waxed and waned as the clouds of tear gas drifted to and fro. I could no more escape that howl than they could escape their pain. Years later, I would hear the drone of cicadas as they emerged from their sleep. This noise was like that, but multiplied to almost deafening levels.

I'm not sure how long I staggered around the streets of Washington listening to that ghastly howl. It might have been an hour, maybe two. Somehow I made my way to a place where there wasn't much tear gas. Somebody put his hand on my shoulder, and asked me, "Are you all right?"

"I can't see," I replied.

"Do you know the area?"

"I don't even know where I am right now, except that it's downtown Washington. But, yes, I'm from around here."

"Maybe you can help us. We have a problem."

They turned out to be a busload of people who had come from Ohio. They had made arrangements to stay someplace in the DC area, but the guy who was supposed to guide them there had been separated from them by the tear gas attacks. They didn't know how to get to their assigned quarters, or even where or what it was. They'd been looking for their guide for an hour with no success.

I told them that I knew of a place where they could find shelter for the night. I couldn't drive the bus, of course. But I might be able to direct the driver there. All he had to do was follow my directions. That turned out to be a bit harder than I thought, because the traffic by then had been so thoroughly disrupted that neither I nor the bus driver was sure where we were. He was following traffic far out from the Dupont Circle area, reading out names of streets where he could glimpse them, names which meant little to me, as I had never been in that particular part of Washington before. Somehow, I got them to the Key Bridge, where we could get over the Potomac River into northern Virginia. I told him to steer his way to Falls Church, where I'd been living. I knew that area fairly well, and could easily direct him to Langley Hill from there.

We spent the next half hour driving around aimlessly. He would describe what he was seeing, and I'd try to make sense of it. If there were any signs directing him to Falls Church, he missed them, and we ended up circling Arlington Cemetery and getting lost in the area just west of the cemetery. But then we crossed a road that was labeled with a route sign: "244." That was Columbia Pike. I didn't know where we were along that road; nothing he described seemed familiar to me. But I had lived for a couple of years in an area just west of Arlington and a few blocks off Columbia Pike, and was sure that if we traveled west, we would pass some landmarks I recognized.

At this point, the driver must have lost any faith he had in my knowledge of the area. But he followed my directions, and as we drove down Columbia Pike he described what we were passing. Suddenly, it all made sense. I knew where we were. We were going toward a neighborhood called Bailey's Crossroads.

I told him to take a right onto Leesburg Pike, and described the businesses he would see on the corner there. (That place looks like a freeway intersection now, with cloverleaf ramps and all, but back then it was a simple crossing of two main drags.) I remember the relief in his voice when he answered that the intersection was just as I described it. We turned right and made our way up Leesburg Pike through Falls Church and onto Great Falls Street and Chain Bridge Road and finally to Langley Hill, with me describing from memory the landmarks we would pass and the turns we'd have to take. It took my mind off the pain in my eyes, and eased the mind of our driver. And that was how we navigated for the next half hour, with me referring to my mental map of the area and identifying the landmarks he would need to make his way to the Langley Hill Friends Meeting.

My vision had started to return as we approached the meeting house. I couldn't see stuff in the distance, but I could hold my eyes open long enough to make out my immediate surroundings. The driver parked the bus in the parking lot of the meeting house and guided me inside, where I explained his predicament to our hosts. It turned out that the van I'd been sent to guide had called the meeting house again, and another guide had been despatched to steer them back. The Quakers hadn't planned on my bunch, of course, but space was made for them. I



spent the next half hour rinsing out my eyes, and then called home to tell them that I'd be very, very late. I spent some time listening to the radio and television reports. From what I heard from them, there was no mention of the tactics the police had used. I'd expected that; it had taken months for the truth about Chicago to come out. It was another hour or two before I saw well enough to drive home, even on the empty back roads I knew I'd be using.

I had planned on attending the Saturday demonstration, but felt that I'd already had enough

excitement for one weekend, and spent that day instead at the Friends meeting after getting a good ten hours of sleep and letting my vision return to some semblance of normal. As it turned out, that day's demonstrations went off without a hitch. The crowd was estimated at about a half a million people, perhaps twice as many as the famous civil rights march in 1963. It was peaceful. There would be no repeat of last night's police riots with its throngs of tear-gassed, bewildered people and its thousands of screaming birds. One of those nights was enough.

Thinking About Race

Colorblindness as blindness **From *The New Jim Crow:*** ***Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*, p. 24'**



“The deeply flawed nature of colorblindness, as a governing principle, is evidenced by the fact that the public consensus supporting mass incarceration is officially colorblind. It purports to see black and brown men not as black and brown, but simply as men—raceless men—who have failed miserably to play by the rules that the rest of us follow quite naturally. The fact that so many black and brown men are rounded up for drug crimes that go largely ignored when committed by whites is unseen. Our collective colorblindness prevents us from seeing this basic fact. Our blindness also prevents us from seeing the racial and structural divisions that persist in society: the segregated, unequal schools, the segregated, jobless ghettos, and the segregated public discourse—a public conversation that excludes the current pariah caste. Our commitment to colorblindness extends beyond individuals to institutions and social arrangements. We have become blind, not so much to race, but to the existence of racial caste in America.

“More than forty-five years ago, Martin Luther King Jr. warned of this danger. He insisted that blindness and indifference to racial groups is actually more important than racial hostility to the creation and maintenance of racialized systems of control.”

The BYM Working Group on Racism meets 10am – 1pm most months on the third Saturday, usually at Bethesda Friends Meeting or Friends Meeting of Washington. If you would like to attend, on a regular or a drop-in basis, contact clerk David Etheridge, david.etheridge@verizon.net.

Langley Hill Friends Meeting
6410 Georgetown Pike
McLean, Virginia 22101-2210
Address Correction Requested

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