

, The Green Street

Green Street Monthly Meeting of Friends

45 West School House Lane

Philadelphia, PA 19144

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West Philadelphia Preparative Friends Meeting

4718 Windsor Avenue

Philadelphia, PA 19143



Meeting for Worship

10:30 AM Via Zoom/83195217639

October 2021

Sunday, 3rd	10:30 AM	Via Zoom/83195217639
Sunday, 10th	10:30 AM	Via Zoom/83195217639
Sunday, 17th	10:30 AM 12:30 PM	Via Zoom/83195217639 Monthly Meeting for Business
Sunday, 24th	10:30 AM	Via Zoom/83195217639
Sunday, 31st	10:30AM	Via Zoom/83195217639

Minutes of Green Street Monthly Meeting for Business Held Ninth Month 19, 2021

Present: Jocelyn Banks, Gabe Ehri (clerk), Lola Georg, Viv Hawkins (recording), Afroza Hossain, Gabbreell James, Cheryl McFadden, Chris Mohr, Robin Mohr, Sharon Mullally, Frank Perch, Ellen Sleeter, Tracey Smith, Traci Hjelt Sullivan, Marille Thomas, Jerry Williams, Margaret Wood, Ashanta Washington

The meeting convened at 12:30p.m. via Zoom.

Opening Worship and Reading of Query

How does this decision support Green Street Friends Meeting in its goal to transform into an actively anti-racist faith community?

Care & Counsel Committee Items

Lola Georg reported that 1) Samantha Connell and Mike Kelley's wedding under the care of the meeting happened yesterday and was great. 2) JoAnn Seaver and Bill Van Stone are in Bill's final days, so please help them in your prayers, 3) Several people are stepping off of Care and Counsel Committee: Cheryl McFadden and Bill Van Stone now, and Lola at the end of the year. People who are interested to serve are encouraged to reach out to Nominating Committee.

202109-1. Amy Verstappen and Joshua Guttoff clearness for marriage

A committee appointed by Green Street Friends Meeting's Care and Counsel Committee, composed of Lola Georg (clerk), Robin Mohr, Chris, Mohr, Lori Sinitzky, David La Fontaine, Jocelyn Banks, and Frank Perch, met with Amy Verstappen and Joshua Guttoff on August 14, 2021 to discern clearness for taking their marriage under the care of Green Street Friends Meeting.

The committee recommends that Green Street Friends Meeting take this marriage under its care with expected approval at the September 19, 2021 meeting for worship with attention to business.

The clearness committee inquired of Amy and Josh about how they met, what draws them together as a couple, the love they share with each other, the joys of their extended families, the strain of medical issues, and the challenges of combining households during the pandemic. However, most of the discernment centered on matters of faith: personal similarities and differences that Amy and Josh hold as a Quaker and a Rabbi, respectively. In addition, some time was devoted to the responsibilities of the meeting when a marriage is taken under the meeting's care. We unite in having found this clearness process a deeply spiritual experience and a continued reminder that God works with, and through, our differences as well as our similarities.

Meeting affirmed clearness of Amy Verstappen and Joshua Guttoff's intention to marry and enthusiastically approved holding this marriage under the care of Green Street Friends Meeting.

A wedding care committee will include Jocelyn Banks, Frank Perch, and Robin Mohr, possibly joined by David La Fontaine.

202109-2. Afroza Hossain membership

A committee appointed by Green Street Friends Meeting's Care and Counsel Committee, comprised of Viv Hawkins, Traci Hjelt-Sullivan, Sharon Mullally, and Marille Thomas, met twice with Afroza Hossain on August 10 and 12, 2021 to discern clearness for membership with Green Street Friends Meeting.

The committee recommends Afroza for membership, with the first reading expected in the September meeting for business and the second reading expected in October 2021. Afroza's brief email of May 16, 2021, following GSFM's approval of a redistribution of our wealth to reparations, expressed interest in becoming a member. During our conversations, we explored such topics as our spiritual journeys to Quakerism; differences between membership and attendance with GSFM; our experiences of belonging and/ or experiencing microaggressions in predominantly white spaces; measuring up to our understanding of what being Quaker means, both including and beyond norms which are dominant among liberal U.S. Quakerism; and implications of being employed by Philadelphia Yearly Meeting while a member, particularly of GSFM.

We unite in having found this clearness process a rich spiritual experience and a continued invitation for GSFM on its pilgrimage toward becoming beloved, anti-racist, multicultural faith community.

Afroza's name is pronounced with a long "O" and a "Z" as in zesty.

Meeting received this first reading of a report recommending the membership of Afroza Hossain. This will be brought for second reading in October 2021.

202109-3. Ashanta Washington and children membership

A committee appointed by Green Street Friends Meeting's Care and Counsel Committee comprised of Susan Christian, Lola Georg, Viv Hawkins, Gabbrell James, and Jerry Williams met twice with Ashanta Washington on August 11 and 19, 2021 to discern clearness for membership with Green Street Friends Meeting for her, her son Brix Dzakpasu, and daughter Janese Washington.

The committee enthusiastically recommends Ashanta for membership and Brix and Janese for associate membership. The first reading is expected in the September meeting for business and the second reading in October 2021.

Ashanta's email of July 13, 2021 expressed interest in becoming a member. During our clearness process, we inquired into the content of her membership letter and explored Ashanta's spiritual journey; experiences of belonging at GSFM; differences between membership and attendance with GSFM; and implications of being employed by GSFM while a member of the meeting. Coming together in this clearness process we greatly appreciated the opportunity to get to know Ashanta more fully and to savor the depth of personal transformations that nurture her spirituality, sense of community, testimony, and beliefs. She feels "Quakerism is a lifestyle" which "found me," "God put me in a body of believers," and her spiritual journey to unlearn racism and "build my spirit" at GSFM. Ashanta understands and accepts the responsibilities of membership, and we welcome the addition of her time and talents to the GSMM community.

We encouraged Ashanta to spend personal time among us and be 100% her authentic self, knowing that her connection with Spirit will benefit us all. During meeting for worship and fellowship, we ask other members and attenders to honor that time, share fellowship with Ashanta, and not request her professional assistance during it. We suggest the Personnel Committee and Care and Counsel Committee regularly check in with Ashanta to ensure she is able to bring her full self to us as a member, unimpeded

by her employment with GSFM and with Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. As a member-employee, Ashanta will continue to observe strict confidentiality on the job.

Meeting received this first reading of a report recommending the membership of Ashanta Washington and associate membership of her son Brix Dzakpasu, and daughter Janese Washington. These membership will be brought for second reading in October 2021.

A Friend noted the concern in two of these reports about being a person of color while staff of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, a combination which was a problem for another GSFM member in the past.

202109-4. Report and Requests of Reparations Committee

Marille Thomas and Afroza Hossain read the following report. Marille added that this project is for year 1 and plans for future years are not yet known. This proposal was reviewed with Black members and attenders of GSFM who offered joyful support.

Report from Green Street Friends Meeting's Reparations Committee September 2021

This is to report on plans of Green Street Friends Meeting's (GSFM) Reparations Committee and to bring related requests to you for your consideration, since our July 29, 2021 informal update via the meeting listserv.

Reparations is economic and spiritual repairs for the intergenerational harms of slavery, Jim Crow, and their afterlives. It is spiritual work intended to address the theft and pillaging of Black wealth for 400 years. This 2022 project is about protecting and securing Black wealth and redistributing Green Street Meeting's resources to stabilize Black homeownership. We hope it is one step on our pathway to offer and work for reparations to and with the Black Germantown community.

In keeping with the Reparations Committee proposal approved in GSFM's meeting for business on May 16, 2021, the Reparations Committee hosted a listening session with Black members and attenders of GSFM on July 8, 2021. We prayerfully considered this input, met for further discernment, and met in retreat on August 28-29, 2021 to plan a project which emerged from the first listening session and was detailed in a second listening session on September 12, 2021.

We plan to host 4-6 legal clinics for Black, Germantown homeowners, in 19138 and 19144 zip codes, with the intent to help stabilize local Black families, preserve Black wealth, and mitigate displacement from gentrification. The clinics will feature pro bono legal (real estate and estate) services, notary services, and assist with fees for related legal filings, taxes, and other needs that may emerge. The legal clinics will run Jan-Jun 2022 on the 3rd Saturday of each month at Green Street Friends Meeting from 10am-2pm. Our closing event on Saturday June 19, 2022 will include a Juneteenth celebration.

The eight members of the Reparations Committee are committed to this project. And we know it is bigger than us. In addition to working with neighborhood groups, legal firms, and others, we request *your* assistance and that of other GSFM f/Friends so we can together best serve members of our Germantown community.

For this effort to be a resounding success and lead the way for additional on-the-ground reparations projects, we have a few requests of Meeting.

1. We invite you each to enter into this project in various ways, which we'll detail in coming listserv emails, and to be invigorated, personally and collectively, as have we.
2. Some people wish to contribute financially to GSFM's reparations work. We ask GSFM to receive these donor-designated contributions, account for them, and hold them for Reparations Committee use.
3. We will require someone who is authorized to write and sign GSFM checks to do so throughout each of the legal clinics, in order to provide payments for filing fees, etc.
4. To preserve GSFM's 2021-22 fiscal year allocation of \$50,000 for direct reparations, we request a 2021-22 operating budget for Reparations Committee of \$5,000; it will cover hospitality, supplies (including COVID), copying, and other expenses.
5. With GSFM's secretary, we reserved the entire meetinghouse for the dates of legal clinics and a trial run date with GSFM's secretary, having seen them as clear on the Green Street Friends School calendar. We ask GSFM members, particularly Building Committee members, to help us protect those reservations.
6. For as long as COVID warrants, we recommend additional arrangements be made with the cleaning crew for Saturdays following the clinics and before meeting for worship the following Sundays.

We remain grateful to GSFM for your support of this work. We believe it embodies Friends values and helps GSFM members "be patterns" for the work of redistribution and reparations in the wider world.

Respectfully, Members of the Reparations Committee

Afroza Hossain, Anne Bayless, Eppchez Yes, Gabbreell James, Lucy Duncan, Marille Thomas, Sharon Mullally, Viv Hawkins

Responses to requests:

- 1. Requires no decision from meeting for business.***
- 2. GSFM agrees to receive donor-designated contributions restricted for the reparations project, as the Reparations Committee sees fit.***
- 3. The clerk trusts that this need will be arranged without a decision from meeting for business.***
- 4. Friends approved a \$5,000 budget for Reparations administrative expenses through June 30, 2022. Reparations Committee will align future budget requests with GSFM's annual budget process, beginning with the calendar 2022 budget.***
- 5. Gabe, as GSFS clerk, will impress upon the senior staff of GSFS that these dates are reserved for Reparations Committee use. Reparations Committee is encouraged to request the loan of GSFS's air filtration device. The clerk will ask that flyers or literature be shared through GSFS's network.***
- 6. The meeting asks property committee's attention, with sufficient lead time to plan for January's open house.***

202109-04. Report from Nominating Committee for Approval

Gabe presented this report, in the absence of members of Nominating Committee.

Stepping down or terming out in a current position:

Care and Counsel

Lola Georg as of December 30, 2021 (clerk)

Cheryl McFadden, as of September 20, 2021

Bill Van Stone, as of September 20, 2021

QVS Support Committee

Bill Van Stone, as of September 20, 2021

SECOND READING

For a second reading in a new position for a three-year term

Hospitality Committee

Sam Connell, for a three-year term through 6/30/2024, and as Clerk

Afroza Hossain, for a three-year term through 6/30/2024

Friends enthusiastically approved these appointments.

Children & Youth Religious Education

Robin Mohr as Clerk

Friends enthusiastically approved this appointment.

Update on Meeting House Signage

The following written report, circulated by email previously to the listserv, was introduced but not read aloud. From the Ad Hoc sign committee (Jo Ann Seaver, Margaret Wood, Ellen Sleeter and L. Lanza) to listserv

Over the summer, many factors resulted in friends in the committee to not able to meet sooner, and since late August and Sept, communications between the contracted designers/builders (Isaiah C. Price and Vienna Enos), the ad hoc sign committee and various members of the monthly meeting have seasoned our understanding of right order.

The process has been valuable in clarifying these factors, and we aim to clarify the tweaks needed to produce a final version that works optimally for the function of the project. Ellen and Lanza will take the lead on project coordination so the project can continue to move forward.

The bottom line is that having communicated, met with, and taken in feedback from multiple parties – we are pausing the permanent installation of the welcome sign – in order to review and redesign to the welcome sign to ensure it

- is at the optimal dimensions for
- the approved wording
- in font sizes and spacing that can be read as intended
- for passersby from distance of street and sidewalk can view it above stone wall (approx. 48” high)

Other criteria are

- the sign should be located where it will not overly obscure the view of the front of meeting house; and
- installed into the ground is deep and strong enough to safely withstand children’s play.

In addition, we united on the decision to pay Isaiah Price (and through him his assistant Vienna Enos) who have worked in good faith. We have requested Isaiah to submit the invoice for work performed thus far so they can be paid in a timely manner. Isaiah is willing to make the sign once it is redesigned.

Our proposed timeline and actions:

The ad hoc sign committee plans to finalize specs to meet the above criteria, and assuming no further complications, to request Isaiah and Vienna to complete the product and install it. We aim to have it in the ground before it becomes too hard, this fall.

Questions may be directed to L. Lanza and or Ellen Sleeter.

Faithfully submitted – the Ad Hoc Sign Committee

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned, after a period of open worship, at 1:35p

News & Announcements

Please join us via zoom, **Sunday, October 24, 2021** (after Meeting for Worship) as we discuss Color of Water, by James McBride.

Valeria Anderson & Mary Noland will host the discussion. We welcome those who have and have yet to read this book which was published 25 years ago. We are looking forward to a fun and uplifting discussion, please save the date.

Please submit all news and announcements to the secretary by the 28th of each month.

**Meeting for worship is held at 10:30.
We host both in person and virtual Worship.
All are Welcome.**