



The Tote Bag

PYM Religious Education
& Family Resources



October 2021

Dear Friends,

This month's issue features sharing from meetings about what they're up to this fall. Keep sending those updates, wisdom, and ideas!

I've recently spoken with meetings who are seeking to hire a coordinator for their children/youth religious education programs -- Did you know that I have a template job description that might be helpful in that process?

Another good question this month -- What have meetings done when it's time to build or refurbish outdoor play equipment? Have ideas or suggestions? [Send them to me](#), and I'll pass along to the meeting who asked! We talked about how this is an opportunity for all ages in the meeting to discern together what's important about welcoming children at your space?

Thanks for the survey responses gathering topics for Religious Education Conversations this year. The first two are listed below, and upcoming will explore religious education as a form of outreach, child/community safety practices and policies, and intergenerational worship.

Joyfully connecting our community of practice,
Melinda Wenner Bradley
Youth Religious Life Coordinator
mwennerbradley@pym.org

Recipients are subscribed to the PYM Religious Education news list.



REsources for Meetings & Home

Ideas from Meetings!

It is great to hear from meetings and to share ideas and resources that you use - please send your stories and tips to mwennerbradley@pym.org

Chestnut Hill Meeting invites Middle School youth from other meetings to join their growing MS group online on Sundays, 10:45-11:30am. Contact Donna Pucci for more program information and the link to join! fdscoord@chestnuthillquakers.org

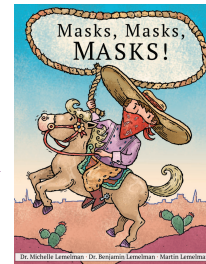
Middletown Meeting (Bucks Quarter) is focused on service this fall. Their youth helped prepare the Holly's Helpers booth at the Bucks Quarter Peace Fair, and are now engaged with technology training to support hybrid Meeting for Worship and social gatherings for the meeting. Their activities are hybrid or well-spaced outdoors (including a corn hole tournament and S'mores fire pit!)

Media Meeting holds online Youth Religious Education programming on the second Sunday of the month. This November there is a book discussion on the book *Braiding Sweetgrass*, which Media-Providence Friends School and the wider Quaker community is invited to participate in. During the Winter-Spring, they are planning intergenerational programming around the book *Holy TroubleMakers and Unconventional Saints*.

Solebury Meeting's high school seniors are discussing what it means to be a Friend/Quaker. "When they go off to college next year, and may want to explain where they come from church-wise, what do they say?" Starting in the present, they will work back to Fox using Margaret Bacon's *The Quiet Rebels* and then look to the future and what they think the Society of Friends will be, or what they'd like it to be, 5, 20 and 40 years from now.

Books and Resources:

MASKS MASKS MASKS! is a PDF picture book that encourages children why wearing masks is taking care of ourselves and one another. Many children are wearing masks all day at school, and this sweet and silly book -- which they can also print and color -- might bring some smiles.



Quaker Peace Education Projects:

How to talk to young people about Afghanistan

In September, our middle school group at meeting was talking about Alice Paul and her work for women's rights. A young person asked, "Could we talk about girls and women in Afghanistan?," connecting that history to our world today. These are resources from a network of peace educators who work with schools in the UK. Teachers, children and young people may have been affected by events in Afghanistan and/or be talking about what they have seen or heard in the media. This is a round up of some resources that could support conversations in educational settings. **Download resources here.**

Anti-racism Learning and Action

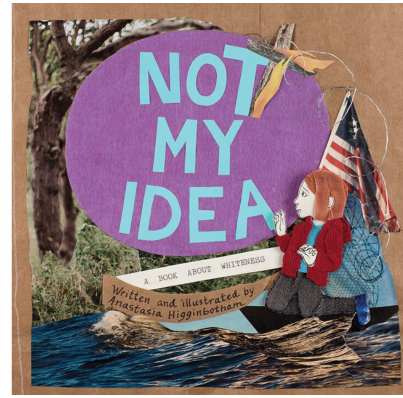
For parents and adults working with children:

Save the Date: Sunday, November 7 (1-4pm)

Anastasia Higginbotham visits PYM Fall Sessions Weekend!

The author of the *Ordinary Terrible Things* series will be with us for an intergenerational program (for ALL ages) exploring her books *Not My Idea: A Book About Whiteness* and *What You Don't Know: A Story of Liberated Childhood*. ***Not My Idea* tackles white supremacy and was named a 2019 International Children's Library White Raven Book.**

Higginbotham makes her books by hand in collage on grocery bag paper, using only recycled materials, and **she'll be sharing a collage workshop with participants.** She writes for social justice organizations and her work has been featured in The Believer, The New York Times, Huffington Post, Women's Media Center, Ms., and The Sun.



The Full Story School

was created by Grace Aldrich and Emma Redden. In their work they ask:

- *how can grown ups do effective collaborative anti-racist education with young people?*
- *how do we talk with young children about race and racial violence?*

Their website states: "Kids thrive when they have a story. Stories are healing, they help build meaning, community, and resilience. When we offer our kids the whole truth, they are more equipped to navigate the world." Programs offered include "Role Play Drop Ins" on the first Thursday of every month, 6:30 pm EST, where folks engage in roleplaying scenarios from their life with children related to race in any way. Cost is sliding scale and there's no need to sign up ahead of time. [Learn more here.](#)

PYM Religious Education Conversations (online)

Thursday, October 28 at 7:00pm

How's it going? Checking in and sharing joys and challenges as the pandemic continues to impact program choices. A space for mutual support this fall!

Thursday, December 2 at 7:00pm

Exploring prayer with children. There are many ways to pray, and teach prayer. What are some we use or are curious about how to share with young people in our meetings?

[Register to receive the Zoom links.](#)

Historic Fair Hill: *the place to be this Fall!*

Is your meeting looking for a field trip or outdoor space for a program this fall? Historic Fair Hill invites meetings to come visit, play, and learn! The historic Quaker burial ground is the resting place of notable abolitionists and reformers including Lucretia and James Mott, Robert and Harriet Purvis, and Anna T. Jeanes. **It's also a hub of community activity in its neighborhood with gardening and literacy projects.** Outdoor history tours are led through various lenses, nature lessons are offered, and there is the opportunity to simply explore and enjoy the 4.5 acres of green space and great trees.

Upcoming: Saturday, October 16!

[The Reading Promise Festival](#) from 12-4pm. Community service will include resetting grave stones and transplanting iris and day lilies.

Field Trips Flyer! to print and share
[Learn more about visiting HFH here!](#)



PYM Friends visited Historic Fair Hill at the start of the 2021 Annual Sessions. Photo: Jean Warrington

Quaker Parent Mutual Support Groups!

Please share with families in your meeting!

These groups will meet for six months, starting roughly in mid-November, for one hour every two weeks. *The purpose is to provide Friends who are currently parenting children with a space for mutual conversation and support.*

This year, the project is co-sponsored by New York Yearly Meeting, Friends United Meeting, and Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, but ALL Quaker parents are welcome to participate, regardless of location or affiliation. Participating parents need access to Zoom and the ability to converse in English.

Parents can register here until October 31.



Sharing Ideas for First Day programs: *Patterns and Examples!*

I hope as you create programs, activities, and try ideas you're excited about, you'll share your lesson plans, handouts, calendars, etc. The place for easy access and sharing among our Community of Practice:

The **folder in Google Drive is available** to contribute and find fresh ideas.



Stay in touch!



The Quaker Religious Education Collaborative (QREC) has a group on Facebook for sharing of support and resources, **Valiant Together**.

Visit **PYM Religious Education** for resources and support. When you find, "*I have a question about resources, programs . . . or a great idea to share!*" reach out to Melinda Wenner Bradley, Youth Religious Life Coordinator, MWennerBradley@pym.org

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