

Religious Education at Stony Run Friends Meeting & Friends Church Baltimore



for parents, teachers, and all members of our faith communities

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Calendar of Events 2025 – 2026 (*subject to change*)

September 7	First day of regular classes
September 14	FDS classroom Open House for families
September 28	All-ages Assembly for Camping Weekend
November 1	All Saints festival @ the Friends Burial Ground, 4:30 pm
November 22	Pie Bake (Middle and High School Young Friends)
November 30	All-ages Assembly for Thanksgiving
December 21	Young Friends cookie baking afternoon
December 28	All-ages holiday Assembly
April 5	All-ages Assembly for Easter; Egg hunt led by Young Friends
May 24	All-ages Assembly for Memorial Day
June 8	Last regular class, presentation of gift books and Ice Cream Social
June 15	Summer Assemblies begin

Overview of Religious Education at Stony Run

The Religious Education Committee provides year-round Sunday morning activities for children of all ages through a variety of programs.

Meeting for Worship is always open to children of all ages. Children under six years old have space to gather every First Day in the Nursery pre-primary room. The Elementary First Day School class welcomes children from kindergarten through fifth grades. Our Middle and High School Class includes those in grades six through twelve. Once a month (normally near high-travel holidays) and in the summers, all our school-aged youth gather in one group for Assemblies.

Our program uses the time together for showing and guiding students to see the variety of spiritual paths available to them. Community-building is a prime goal. Religious education honors the Light within all and respects the contributions of the individual students, teachers, and parents in the program.

Per courtesy, safety and Maryland law please don't allow children younger than 13 to wander Meetinghouse halls or the playground during Meeting for Worship or other events without an adult presence. Please be considerate of our childcare workers and pick up your children quickly after the rise of Meeting.

We encourage parents and caregivers to become active in the programs provided. You are welcome at all activities.

Meeting for Worship

Meeting for Worship offers time for silent reflection and seeking of the Inner Spirit. Friends have a saying, "religion is caught, not taught." The best way for children to come to know Meeting for Worship is to participate in it. We provide tools for children, just as we provide them for adults, to help them to enter fully into worship. These materials are located outside of the Meeting room, under the table in the hallway, and children are invited to choose whatever might help them to enter and be in that contemplative space.

Children are welcome in Meeting for Worship at any time, though they customarily attend the first 20 minutes of late meeting and are then escorted to age appropriate First Day School classes. Parents do not need to leave the meeting unless they want to accompany their children.

Classes and Curriculum

Childcare in the Nursery (Room 214; ages infant-age 5)

Stony Run is committed to providing childcare for everyone for all Meeting events. The Nursery is open to all children up to age 5 every First day during Meeting for Worship (9:00 am – 12:15 pm September through June; 8:00 am – 11:15 am in July and August.) Two care-giving adults will be present at all times. All our Nursery workers have received background checks.

First Day School for grades K-5 (in the Double classroom (rooms 101-102), 1ages 6-11)

Elementary aged children from both Stony Run and Friends Church Baltimore are led by a teacher and an adult volunteer each week. Our focus includes the power of Spirit in our lives, what Bible stories mean to us, and the example of Quakers past and present through stories and activities that speak to children. Once a month, normally on the 2nd Sunday, we feature lessons from Faith & Play and Godly Play.

Young Friends for grades 6-12 (Room 202; ages 12-18)

These students are a self-governing group. The group traditionally has held Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business on the First Sunday of the month (Bagels for Business), which is their business meeting and time for planning their time together. This includes planning service projects, such as organizing a Meeting-wide picnic at the burial grounds, baking cookies for the Meeting Christmas carol-sing, a "Pie day" bake sale, organizing Easter assembly and an Earth Day electronics recycling day.

Policies

The RE Committee respects the policies put in place by the Meeting community for the smooth and ethical operation of our program. The details of various policies are below.

Fire Drills

If there is a fire drill, teachers, please calmly escort the children in your classroom to their designated safe spot and stay with them until the fire drill is over (at which time class may resume, time permitting), or parents pick their children up.

Record-keeping

Teachers are strongly urged to keep attendance rosters complete and up to date; these are documents which will be filed and available should any children later wish to have them as evidence of their intentions to be Conscientious Objectors.

Teachers are asked to track all volunteer attendance within the class (even parents) at the bottom of each printed roster of class attendance. Please record the date and name of any volunteer.

Child Safety Policy

Stony Run has adopted detailed standards governing our supervision of children's activities. The entire policy is available in a binder in the Library and on the website.

The following is a summary of our guidelines set out for volunteers who interact with children, including within the context of First Day School:

- Parents are responsible for supervising their children before and after First Day classes and during all meeting events. It is the responsibility of parents to teach their children about appropriate and inappropriate behaviors. This includes going outside or to the Dining room for Simple Lunch. Classes end promptly at the close of Meeting.
- Our goal is to have two adults present in each class, but at times the ratio is one adult to up to 5 children or youth. If there is ever an instance of a class with just one adult and one child, that adult will combine their class with another group.
- Regular volunteers must complete a background check every three years (administered and seen only by the Facilitator). The background check does not include credit checks and is focused only on child safety. Occasional volunteers (like parents volunteering in their child's classroom) are not required to have a background check; however, it is encouraged.
- Inappropriate behaviors toward and in front of children are prohibited. These behaviors include, but are not limited to, smoking and use of tobacco, weapons possession, being under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, prescription drugs used illegally, displays of sexual behavior, pornography, physical neglect, inadequate supervision (including lax supervision of

small children on the playground), and mental or emotional injury to a minor. Overall, any behavior that would be considered inappropriate is prohibited.

- If there are situations that require a 1:1 adult to child ratio (examples may include travel on field trips, or specific volunteer instances), the parent must provide written permission for the 1:1 ratio.
- Regarding bathroom use, older children are allowed to go to and from the closest bathrooms on their own. We avoid a 1:1 ratio while helping younger children in the bathroom by propping open the bathroom door in the Nursery to provide easy, visible access.
- The meeting requires that all volunteers report suspected child abuse to the Clerk of Meeting or the Facilitator, who will then investigate the claim, keeping the Meeting community informed of the investigation with respect to matters that are not confidential.

Expectations for Students, Parents, and Teachers

Expectations are part of our social contract within Religious Education classes, and we offer these expectations to students, parents, and teachers, asking them to agree to and respect them.

Expectations for Students

- **Respect:** Treat teachers and other students with respect and courtesy. This includes listening to others, following instructions, and considering the feelings of other students during class activities.
- **Cooperation:** Pay attention and cooperate fully with teachers and other children.
- **Positive Attitude:** Participate in class activities with a positive attitude.

Expectations for Parents

- **Respect:** Be respectful of teachers and their children by dropping off and collecting children in a timely manner. If needed, allow time for a reasonable parting from their children when dropping off.
- **Cooperation:** Work with teachers to manage any problems that arise in the classroom. Please note that if a teacher is having difficulty helping a child cooperate with others or engage in the class, the teacher may request that the child's parent stay in the classroom. That way the teacher will be able to fulfill their responsibilities to the rest of the class.
- **Communication:** Let teachers know about any specific needs as well as either permanent or temporary situations that might require special consideration. For childcare in the nursery, parents must complete a form for each child. Each time a child is delivered to the nursery, parents must complete the sign-in sheet to let the childcare providers know how to contact the parent.

Expectations for Teachers/Childcare Providers

- **Respect:** Teachers are expected to model the values of the Friends community for the students, and to treat students with respect and courtesy. This includes maintaining a note of discretion with other adults in discussing perceived classroom issues and avoiding airing of negative comments about the children within their hearing after class and within the larger community.
- **Cooperation:** Teachers may need to work with parents to manage problems that arise in the classroom. If a teacher is having difficulty encouraging a student to be part of the class or

cooperate with others, the teacher may ask the parent to stay with the student during First Day School, so that the parent can help the student acclimate while the teacher helps the rest of the class with the lesson.

- **Participation:** Welcome children at 11:20 and keep them until 12:15, when First Day School is dismissed.
- **Communication:** Teachers will communicate with parents and children at the pickup about child's specific needs, as well as either permanent or temporary situations that might require special consideration. If unavailable to teach a session, teachers are expected to arrange for a substitute or ask the Religious Education Committee to find a substitute.

Teaching Opportunities

All classes and assemblies are guided by volunteers. There are opportunities to teach First Day School classes, lead Young Friends activities and lead All-age Assemblies. Although class schedules are set at the beginning of the school year, the Committee is committed to finding an appropriate volunteer opportunity at any time of the year.

Teaching support

Religious Education teachers are volunteers and the Stony Run Friends community values their contributions. To support teachers in their efforts, the Usher will check the hallways and classrooms shortly after 11:20 to ensure compliance with the Child Safety Policy.

We encourage teachers to bring student concerns and issues quickly to the Religious Education Committee for resolution. We want to ensure that disruptions to the classroom environment are resolved quickly with little effect on other students in the classroom.

Throughout the year, if there are new children in the classroom, parents are asked to fill out a Child Information Sheet so that we may update the roster.

For extra physical materials, there are resources in the Double classroom as well as in the Nursery. If you need to purchase additional supplies to support your teaching, you can either request the Facilitator to make a purchase on your behalf or make a purchase and submit a request for reimbursement.

Teaching requirements

All teachers and regular substitute teachers are required by the Meeting's Child Safety Policy and Maryland State law to undergo a background check before working with students. This check looks for criminal activity related to children and does not include credit checks.

Adult Religious Education

From time to time, Stony Run has held a class for adults at the same time as the youth classes. The adult RE class provides an ongoing opportunity, in community, to learn about the faith and practice of the Religious Society of Friends. If you would like the opportunity to participate in an adult RE class during the youth classes, or at another time, please contact any member of the committee.

Also, members and friends of the Meeting regularly present adult Forums on First Days. Many of these take place either before or after the Meeting for Worship, and childcare is available for younger children

during these times. Forums and other opportunities for adult spiritual formation are announced in the Silent Announcements and monthly Newsletter.

Baltimore Yearly Meeting Camping & Youth Programs

Baltimore Yearly Meeting (BYM) holds a series of **weekend conferences** for Junior Young Friends (JYF's) and Young Friends (YF's). Children in sixth through eighth grades are Junior Young Friends (JYF) and high-school aged children are Young Friends (YF) for the purposes of Baltimore Yearly Meeting activities. The conferences, or "cons", are held at different Quaker Meetinghouses throughout the school year. Cons are a fun way to see friends from other Meetings and camp, make new friends, and retreat from the pressures of teenage life, while still developing skills around living in community and having a lot of fun.

Junior Young Friends Cons (grades 6-8)

- *dates haven't been set, but we'll update as soon as we hear!*

Young Friends Cons (grades 9-12)

- September 26-28 @ Opequan
- November 21-23
- January 9-11
- February 13-15
- April 10-12
- May 15-17 @ Stony Run

Baltimore Yearly Meeting's **summer camping programs** provide opportunities for spending extended time living in functioning Quaker communities that encourage tenderness, loving concern, dynamic activity, laughter, respect, work, honesty, silence, and joyful noise. Camps at Catoctin, Opequan, and Shiloh offer youth ages 9-14 two weeks of building community, lots of time with nature, and deep spiritual experiences. The Teen Adventure program is for youth ages 15-17 and operates from a base camp in Lexington, VA, and trips of twelve campers and two leaders embark for three weeks of hiking, canoeing, and service projects.

Stony Run and Friends Church Baltimore are both committed to participating in and supporting BYM's camping programs and encourage our children and youth to attend. Stony Run is glad to offer financial support to families from both communities to help them attend camp.

During the Baltimore Yearly Meeting Annual Sessions, youth are invited to take part in **Junior Yearly Meeting**. JYM (and Annual Sessions) are held in late July-early August each year, and participants take part in activities that help connect us all across worshipping communities.

Friends School

Friends School of Baltimore is adjacent to the Stony Run Meetinghouse. Founded in 1784, Friends School of Baltimore provides a coeducational, college preparatory program guided by the Quaker values of truth, equality, simplicity community and peaceful resolution of conflict.

Friends Church Baltimore holds worship on the FSB campus. We share religious education experiences, the playground, simple lunch, and some facilities with each other.

For more information about a Quaker education, please visit the school's webpage at friendsbalt.org.

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Please contact any member of the Religious Education (RE) Committee with any questions, concerns, suggestions, or ideas.



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