Baltimore Yearly Meeting’s Women’s Retreat Working Group Annual Report 2023

This year’s working group was composed of Inga Erickson (Herndon), Stacey LaRoy (Herndon), Cameron Hughes (Goose Creek) and Carol Seddon (Stony Run).

On Saturday, Oct 21, about 50 women attended the 2023 Baltimore Yearly Meeting’s Women Retreat, planned by women from Adelphi Meeting and held at the Friends Community School. The Planning Committee submitted a detailed report of their process, and hardly needed the support of the Working Group.

The retreat was a full day, and had the theme of “Hope for an Inclusive Future”. Worship, workshops, a plenary panel, a business meeting, a coffeehouse, and opportunities for shared meals and fellowship filled the day. The retreat was hybrid (in person and online via Zoom), with paid technical support.

At the business meeting, several women stepped forward to plan the next retreat, and a discussion was held about being in-person for a residential weekend at a facility like Pearlstone Retreat Center (which still holds our deposit money for a future retreat). The women present united in our desire for a several-day retreat in January/February of 2025. We discussed ways to be more inclusive of women who have jobs that prevent them from being able to attend for a weekend; perhaps the retreat could be held from Saturday to Monday instead of Friday to Sunday. Several voices also advocated for quarterly online retreats in order to be even more inclusive for those that cannot commit to a full weekend.

After the retreat, women of York meeting stepped forward to lead the next retreat, and the other individuals bowed out. Several women are testing their leading around quarterly online gatherings, and an email will go out that includes information about who to contact for those who are interested in helping plan those.

The working group will continue its charge as oversight for the Women’s Retreat as a whole. We are grateful to BYM office support for promotion and registration of this year’s event.

After many years of service, Inga Erickson is stepping off the Working Group. The BYM Women’s Retreat Working Group will continue with Carol Seddon, clerk (Stony Run), Cameron Hughes (Goose Creek), and Stacey LaRoy (Herndon), and Helena Jareb (Adelphi).

Respectfully submitted,

BYM Women’s Retreat Working Group

December 18, 2023