



Abington Friends' Road to Reparations

Presented 7/29/22 at PYM Annual Sessions
By Wanda Wyffels

The Road



- Probably not the same as yours was, is, or will be
- Bumpy, starts and stops / Not smoothly paved
- Still on the road, smoothing it as we go

Starting on the Road Without Knowing It

1st Step: Rosie Bothwell putting out copies of Ta-Nehisi Coates' "The Case for Reparations" from The Atlantic, 2014

2nd Step: Placed a plaque on post to graveyard regarding unknown graves of African Americans on 10/15/2016

3rd Step: Marcus Rediker researched Benjamin Lay and gave two talks at AMM in 2016 & 2017

4th Step: Minuted Benjamin Lay as Friend of the Truth on 11/12/2017

5th Step: Placed a gravestone in our cemetery for Benjamin & Sarah Lay on 4/21/2018

6th Step: Kenan Sayers & I began Antiracism Education in 2019

Workshops, Adult Education Classes, Resources in Weekly Announcements /on Website

On the Road, Stopping, Restarting

7th Step: Initial Endowment of \$35,000 for The Rosie Bothwell Fund 9/19

8th Step: Created a Reparations Committee held 11/10/19

9th Step: Reparations Committee laid down 12/12/19

10th Step: Created Guidelines for Fund Distribution, approved 5/20



Still Walking

11th Step: 1st attempt at Minute of Reconciliation 9/13/20

12th Step: Discussion of Minute of Reconciliation at Quarterly Meeting 10/4/20

13th Step: Called Threshing Session for Unity on Minute 11/11/20

14th Step: Education on Lenape from Coalition of Natives & Allies & Lenape Nation of PA 12/9/20 & 1/5/21

15th Step: Minute of Reconciliation approved and sent to AQM & PYM 5/10/21

Minute of Reconciliation

After considerable reflection and discernment, Abington Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) believes that if we are to truly uphold our Testimony of Equality, Equity and Justice and honor the legacy of Quaker abolitionists and equal-rights activists such as Benjamin Lay and Lucretia Mott, we must also acknowledge and take active steps to redress the evils they fought against. We wish to engage in racial reconciliation and healing through acknowledging, apologizing, and atoning for wrongs our Meeting has committed in the past that influence the present.

We acknowledge that the land our meetinghouse and school currently occupy was once home for the Lenni-Lenape. We also acknowledge that early members of our Meeting were members of the white settler population which benefited from the takeover of land and from the violence committed against Indigenous Peoples as a result of such actions as the Doctrine of Discovery, the Walking Purchase and Quaker Indian Boarding Schools. We acknowledge that some early members of our Meeting were enslavers and that the enslavement of Africans contributed to the accumulated wealth we have today.

We apologize for these truths not being fully acknowledged by us sooner and because these actions have contributed to the physical and emotional trauma still being experienced today.

We wish to atone for these past oppressions and injustices in the hope of bringing healing through retrospective justice to African Americans and Indigenous Peoples. To this end, we have set up the Bothwell Reparations Fund to which members and attenders may contribute. Also, we will continue with our deeper education to better understand and seek a renewed and ongoing right relationship.

Here We Go

16th Step: New Reparations Subcommittee formed 7/7/2021,
3 African Americans & 2 whites.

17th Step: Minute of Reconciliation discussed & approved at
Abington Quarterly Meeting to be sent to Yearly Meeting
with resources on Indigenous Peoples 8/1/21

18th Step: Reparations Committee Meetings for planning

19th Step: Touched base with Green Street's wisdom

20th Step: Took 5-week course from the Grassroots Reparations
Campaign Jan/Feb 22

Almost There and On We Go



Placed a grave marker with names and year of burial of people of African descent known to be buried in our graveyard.

Currently finalizing the recipient of our first year's Reparations monies, \$1200.

Encouraging continued additional donations to the Bothwell Reparations Fund so the payout can grow over time.

Latest thought – having a workshop about the UN definition of Reparations and a workshop on the Spirituality of Money