

# Michigan Friends Center

7748 Clarks Lake Road P.O. Box 218 Chelsea, Michigan 48118

*A Quaker-Oriented Facility for Meetings, Retreats and Conferences*

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## Current Programs

## Spring & Summer 2018

### **The Day Before Earth Day**

**1:00 Saturday, April 21**

*Donations welcome.*

This year's Earth Day program will be held the day before. The designated theme is eliminating single-use plastic.

Fun, hands-on activities for kids and adults are offered. Reuse and remake with common plastic materials while keeping them out of the environment, and take home something useful.

Along with the hands-on activities will be a short presentation from Richard Tucker about how the issue of plastics wastes is being handled in other places around the world. Free, with donations cheerfully accepted.

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### **A Day of Solitude and Meditation Practice led by Carol Blotter**

**9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. on Sunday, June 17; Saturday, September 29; and Sunday, December 9**

*Suggested donation \$30 or as able. Pre-registration requested; contact Carol Blotter at 475-0942.*

**Meditation**

Each retreat is an opportunity to enjoy the quiet of the country while practicing sitting and walking meditation. This day is appropriate for anyone interested in meditation: beginners will have break-out instruction; experienced meditators can be in silence all day; those in-between can practice and have their questions answered. These retreats are fundraisers for the benefit of Michigan Friends Center.

Contact Carol at (734)475-0942 or [cb.meditate@gmail.com](mailto:cb.meditate@gmail.com) to register.

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### **Summer Solstice** — a multi-generational celebration of the light and growth

**Thursday, June 21, potluck 6-7 pm; bonfire 7-9** — at the Friends Lake beach; join us for any part (the food will be put away at 7)

*Donations welcome*

**Community** – Ceremonies, Celebrations & Festivals—Body, Mind, & Spirit—Outdoors/Wilderness

We will celebrate the longest day with a potluck dinner followed by a bonfire around which to share thoughts, stories, and songs. All ages welcome. Bring food to share and your own place settings. We will provide water and herbal iced tea.

Bring something to share for after dinner as well-- a story, poem, song, some Solstice lore, or just your readiness to partake in what others have brought. This will be a time to explore various ways of celebrating the light. We welcome your spark.

Bring long sleeves in case there are mosquitoes.

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### **Seeing Systems: Peace, Justice, and Sustainability**

**7:00-8:30 Monday evenings: June 25, (no meeting July 2), July 9, July 16, July 23, July 30, August 6**

*Sliding-scale fee of \$30, \$45, or \$60 (as able) to cover book and other course costs; pre-registration required.*

**Sustainability – Peace & Justice**

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. claimed that whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly -- peace is not possible until we recognize how interrelated we are.

This six session discussion course helps participants to develop systems thinking skills in order to see those connections. We will examine entrenched assumptions that reinforce unhealthy practices and systems. Together, we will envision a more peaceful, just, and sustainable world, discover practical actions we can take toward that goal, and inspire each other to become leaders in our own spheres of influence.

Each session is based on a set of readings from the NWEI course book, with rotating facilitation by course participants. This course is hosted by Michigan Friends Center and offered in partnership with the Interfaith Council for Peace and Justice.

The six sessions will be:

**June 25 It's All Connected:** We usually attempt to solve problems analytically -- by breaking them down looking at the parts. In order to more effectively interpret and solve complex problems, systems thinking helps us to employ various perspectives to look at the whole.

**July 9 Peace Talks:** Peaceful communication is essential to constructive conflict transformation and thus crucial when addressing topics of peace, justice, and sustainability. We will practice activities that promote effective and nonviolent communication.

**July 16 Justice for the Whole Community:** In this session we explore environmental justice in four different ways: who climate change impacts, who has access and rights to water, whose community we deposit our waste in, and how the way we grow our food affects the people closest to that process.

**July 23 Peace and Sustainability in the Midst of Conflict:** As climate changes around the globe, it is likely that conflict will escalate, impacting humans, animals, and other participants in the natural world. In this session we read stories of hope and change, even in the face of oppression, injustice, and formal/undeclared warfare. How can we regenerate our shared world?. How can we visualize and build the inclusive, equitable community in which we want to live?

**July 30 Responding to Structural Violence:** As Dr. Paul Farmer has said, sometimes people are oppressed, and “neither culture nor pure individual will is at fault,” but “historically given (and often economically driven) processes and forces conspire to constrain individual agency.” Using the communication skills from Session Two, we will work to listen and understand someone else’s experience, perhaps from the readings in the book, and to recognize our own experiences with privilege. While structural violence takes many forms, we explicitly address structural violence in these readings by taking a closer look at race and economic inequality.

**August 6 Now What? Co-creating Living Peace:** Practice, Engage, Allow, Create, Emerge – the first letters of these words spell “PEACE”. Using this framework and the network of relationships we have been developing, we will think about how we can use what we have learned to make a real difference for good.

**Please register at <https://seeingsystems2018.eventbrite.com> or contact the Michigan Friends Center office ([manager@mfcenter.org](mailto:manager@mfcenter.org)).**