



NO-RENT SPACE FOR RELIGIOUS AND OTHER VOLUNTARY GROUPS

The Brandywine has space hiding in plain sight for religious and other voluntary groups. Two centuries ago the area was dominated by Quaker farmers who had to get to their meetings for worship by horseback or carriage. So despite the change in the region's demographics it still is rich with historic Friends (i.e., Quaker) meeting houses. Their congregations are active but often are small since cars now carry worshipers further afield. Save for Sunday mornings, many of them would be happy to share the use of their property with other groups. Since Quakers don't decorate with religious symbols, their simple but comfortable worship rooms and children's classrooms are suitable for other religious, denominational and secular groups. Instead of charging rent, these meetings often are willing to share use of their properties in return for some combination of modest expenses and voluntary labor to aid in the upkeep of the property -- they are looking for other groups that are aligned with Quaker values and will also 'care' about these historic buildings.

A Delaware County example is the three century old Concord Meeting House. The former was built in 1728 with brick carried from England as ballast on a colonial ship and is on Concord Road in Concordville. It used to host regional Quaker meetings and, with a balcony, can seat at least 150 (see photos), has a kitchen and boasts a modern supplemental classroom building for children.

Anyone is welcome to visit any Quaker meeting on a Sunday morning, usually at 10 or 11 am, as indicated on its sign. Or to discuss use of any Brandywine area meeting houses and a visit at another time, contact David Leonard at 610 388 0340 or Lynne Piersol at 610 864 3802.

