

The Provident FRIEND

Dec 2010

Providence Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

2010 Christmas Events December 18 & 24

Providence - Christmas Gathering 2010

This year's annual holiday event is happening on Saturday, December 18 at 5:00 pm in the Providence Meetinghouse, with a potluck dinner immediately following at 6 pm. The First Day School will present its interpretation of the Nativity Story, as well as join in the singing of Christmas carols.

If you're wondering what to bring, a request has been made for vegetables, potatoes and (of course) desserts.

At this year's event, the usual performers (First Day School, musicians, etc.) will be joined by puppets. It was, however, not made clear if the puppets will be singing, acting, or cooking.

We hope to see you for what is sure to be a wonderful evening!



Saylesville – Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

The very beautiful annual Christmas Eve Candlelight Service will be held at the Saylesville Meetinghouse at 4:30 PM on Friday, December 24. If you can, bring a candle and candle holder. All are welcome.

Calendar:

Dec 18 Sat: 5pm (p1)
Christmas Gathering &
Potluck (6pm), Providence
Meeting House

Dec 24 Fri: 4:30pm (p1)
Christmas Eve Candlelight
Service, Saylesville Meeting
House

Jan 2 Sun: (p7) East Bay
Bike Path walk with
Eugenia Marks

Jan 9 Sun: Monthly
Meeting For Business,
Providence Meeting House

Jan 13 & 18: (p7) Music
For Children open classes,
Providence Meeting House

Providence Monthly Meeting for Business Minutes- Twelfth Month 12th

Providence Monthly Meeting of Friends 12 Twelfth month, 2010 Minutes of monthly meeting for business.

1. We gathered at 12:15 p.m. at the Providence meeting house, with fourteen present. In the absence of the presiding clerk, Assistant Clerk Debbie Block served as clerk.
2. In the opening worship, the clerk read a Query on Simplicity from the 2001 *Faith and Practice* of New York Yearly Meeting:

Do we keep to moderation and simplicity in our daily lives? Have we allowed the acquisition of possessions to interfere with God's purpose for us? Are our homes places where the presence of God is felt by those who live there and those who visit there?

3. Announcements:

This year's Christmas gathering will be held at Providence meetinghouse on the 18th of Twelfth Month at 5 p.m., with potluck at 6 p.m.

Saylesville will host candlelight worship on the day called Christmas Eve at 4:30 p.m., with light refreshments to follow.

4. The Treasurer noted that Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund has requested a letter confirming that Providence Monthly Meeting is a religious organization in good standing and holding regular worship, before transferring a charitable donation to us. The recording clerk will provide such a letter to Fidelity.

5. For Ministry and Counsel, Dan Lederer brought a proposal for new language in the meeting Handbook to specify the normal procedure for naming a new presiding clerk. The intent of the procedure is to ensure that the current presiding clerk does not bear the burden of finding his or her own replacement, and that Ministry and Counsel be involved in the transition as early as possible. It was noted that the proposed procedure would essentially codify what has been done informally for the past two transitions. Ministry and Counsel also recommends rewording some of our existing Handbook language to provide better support for the presiding clerk through Ministry and Counsel.

Dan clarified that the Handbook is intended as useful guidelines, and the meeting can adapt this procedure as needed in case of unforeseen circumstances.

Friends suggested a number of changes in wording for the proposal. It was clarified that in this meeting, there has not been a formal limit on the number of years a presiding clerk can serve; most have served four to six years. We note that the transition process may be initiated either by a presiding clerk who discerns that his or her term of service is reaching a close, or by Ministry and Counsel if it discerns that a transition to new leadership would best serve the life of the meeting.

We approved the proposed language as modified.

6. For the Finance Committee, Bruce Carlsten reported that the Finance Committee has had some further discussion of the proposed uses of the Smith bequest, and has asked those making the requests to provide additional information. The Committee is not prepared to present the entire list at this time. However, as part of moving the process forward, John Lord presented some details on one proposal, the purchase of two benches for the rear patio.

(continued next page)

Providence Monthly Meeting for Business Minutes (cont. from p2)

The process for spending this money has been confusing and somewhat fluid. The Finance committee clarified that the proposals received to date do not exceed the available funds.

We approve expending up to \$1500 for benches, which John Lord will be responsible for ordering.

Friends also asked to bring forward the request from last month that Peace and Social Concerns Committee be able to spend up to \$1500 for a projection and audio system that includes an LCD projector, DVD player, and speakers. We approve this expenditure.

7. Ministry and Counsel: Dan Lederer reported that Ministry and Counsel is continuing consideration of Quaker Quest. Many Friends felt that the one-day workshop was valuable. If the meeting wishes to proceed with public Quaker Quest programs, the next step would be to form a core committee to begin planning for the public sessions. The entire meeting would need to commit to this, as a major project of the meeting. Ministry and Counsel expects to bring further proposals to us in the next few months.

8. Treasurer's Report: Peter Swaszek distributed an interim report for the first six months of the current fiscal year. He noted that individual contributions are almost \$4000 behind last year; the Finance Committee hopes that end-of-year donations may bring that up. Expenses are running less than budget, as is usual. The major expenditures during the past month were for clapboards and materials for the Saylesville meeting house. We accept this report.

9. Betsy Zimmerman reported that the contract for use of the meetinghouse by the Mary Ann Hall Music for Children program, approved in 11th month, is nearing completion. The director has offered a discount for any meeting children who wish to participate in this program.

10. We closed at 1:45 pm with a period of worship, intending to meet next at the Providence meetinghouse on the 9th of 1st month 2011, God willing.

Debbie Block, assistant presiding clerk

Elizabeth Cazden, recording clerk

The Gift of Snowflakes



A snowflake is a gift
From the heavens to
the earth



As we celebrate the
winter solstice,
Festival of Lights and
Jesus' birth



Each one...a tiny
miracle
Unique...no two alike
And each of us ...a
miracle too



A gift of earth for
heaven's delight.

Joanne Griffin 2010

Around the Meeting

Finance Committee Request To All Committee Clerks

The Finance Committee requests that all committees that have a budget line, discuss their 2011 - 2012

budget requests at their next meeting and communicate these requests to Bruce Carlsten,

clerk of the Finance Committee. Note: The 2011 - 2012 budget goes into affect this coming June 1st

Saylesville Building Gets Attention

Rosanne Cedroni reports:

“Did anyone catch the segment on the Saylesville Meetinghouse on Channel 10 news? What a surprise! I had no idea that this was in the works. Apparently, a number of people are very impressed by all the hard work being

done on the Meetinghouse by volunteers - and they wanted the rest of Rhode Island to know that too! I know Bob Eliot has done a tremendous amount of work, there are so many others from Providence and I don't want to leave out any names - neither can I express how grateful we

are! ... there's also an article in the Valley Breeze. Here's the link: <http://www.valleybreeze.com/Free/MAIN-saylesville-book-swap>

“ACTION SPEAKS LOUDER THEN WORDS!!!!!!!!!!!! This is what needs to be done with a lot of City and Town Projects instead of always just talking about things getting done we should all just volunteer to do these and they will be done.”

Steve Schwartz found the Ch 10 report text, and saw this Viewer Comment:



Appeal From Providence Monthly Meeting Finance Committee

Providence Monthly Meeting
December 10, 2010

Dear Friends,

Over the last 2 years, we have made major improvements in our physical plant. At Providence Meeting, the main floor including the entrance hallway, the silent worship room, and the library now offer a pleasant introduction to the Meeting House, especially to first time visitors. The top floor of the Meeting House has been transformed from a relatively undesirable space to one of great potential including a meeting room or a place for a visiting Friend to stay overnight. Downstairs, we now have a completely renovated kitchen and dining room including four heat-conserving windows. This has already allowed for the hosting of many enjoyable events. At Saylesville, the clapboard siding on the east side of the building has been installed and the building is now secure for the winter. Add to all this the many necessary infrastructure improvements, which are not readily visible, and we can all be proud of our progress. Fortunately, we had the funds to pay for this in our General Fund Reserves.

However, there is still work to be done. At Providence Meeting, this includes the significant expense of replacing 3 outside doors with code approved "panic" release bars, installing code approved exit signage, further upgrading of the electrical system, and the possible installation of a fire/smoke detector system with an alarm going directly to the local fire station. And then there is the heating plant that is giving us trouble at the time of the writing of this letter. At Saylesville, the refurbished windows still have to be installed on the east side of the building. Of course, we all understand that the proper maintenance of both Meeting Houses is the responsibility of everyone that attends Meeting.

The major purpose of this letter is to inform you of the status of Providence Friends Meeting's budget at the half way mark in our fiscal year. The ideal goal is to have members' contributions cover Meeting House expenses and proceeds from our fundraising events, supplemented by earnings from our General Fund Reserves, cover our contributions to Friends' concerns.

As of November 30, we have received contributions of \$13,005. This is \$3,710 less than we had received last year at this date and only 28% of the amount that we have budgeted for the year. As we look toward developing the 2011 – 2012 budget which will guide us starting this coming June, the fact that the balance in the General Fund Reserves has been reduced (as a result of the above stated expenditures as well as market conditions) will result in a reduction in the amount that we are allowed to draw from this fund to meet our operating expenses. Consequently, the Meeting will be even more dependent on members' contributions.

Presently, we have only about 66 "contributing units", i.e., families and individuals who contribute financially to the Meeting. As a guideline, meeting our budgetary goal of \$47,027 in members' contributions this year means that annual contributions must average about \$713 per contributing unit. We recognize that not everyone can contribute this amount, so those of us who are able need to consider giving more.

In writing this letter, we remain mindful of the many non-financial contributions that our members and attenders give us each year. Without these valued contributions, our community would not be the loving and nurturing place that we know it to be.

If you wish to make a contribution in stocks, please contact me directly. Contributing stocks is a very simple process. Especially in the case of highly appreciated stocks, this allows individuals who itemize deductions on their income taxes a significant financial advantage and gives the Meeting the full market value of the stock.

Please consider including a gift to the Meeting's Christmas stocking as part of this joyous holiday season. Checks should be made out to Providence Friends Meeting and sent to our treasurer, Peter Swaszek at 57 Brayton Street, East Greenwich, RI 02818.

In Peace – Bruce Carlsten
Finance Committee clerk
On behalf of the Finance Committee

Items that did not make it into the November newsletter's calendar



Chris and Ariana Steele have a new baby daughter, Roberta Frances Steele!

Ariana gave birth to her at home, at 7:41 am yesterday! [=Nov 30] She weighed in at 10 lbs 8 oz. I'll be forwarding a sign-up sheet soon for anyone who would like to send food over or help them out with chores and such.

Sincerely, Andrea Starr



What a delightful way to increase membership at Providence Meeting.

Congratulations to Mom & Dad!

Bruce Carlsten



I had nothing to do with this!

Albert Einstein



I can't wait until Roberta comes to meeting and says

ROBERTA STEELE!!!!!!!

Steve Schwartz



Music for Children program at the Providence Meetinghouse

Starting in January, the Providence Meeting House will be the location for "Music For Children". This is a 12 week music learning program that interestingly has separate classes for toddlers, 2's (two year

olds), 3's, 4's, 5's and 6's, with different emphasis and activity described for each on the 'Classes' tab of their website:

<http://www.musicforchildrenri.com/>

Free classes will be offered on Thursday, Jan. 13th, 1:00-1:45 and Tuesday, Jan. 18th, 10:00-10:45, and a substantial discount is given if you are from the Meeting.

To attend a free class, sign up for a regular class, or learn more about it, please call Lindsay at 401-272-2006, or email her at:

lindsay@musicforchildrenri.com

Help Requested For Friends Camp

Nat Shed is director (director@friendscamp.org) of the Friends Camp in Waterville, ME., and sent an appeal for help, describing in

particular a need to pay for the cost of kitchen reconstruction before December 31st of this year. The appeal notice did not

fit in the newsletter, but we will endeavor to forward it to all via the listserve. The number 207-873-3499 is listed, and there is also a

'Donation' tab on the home page of their website:

<http://www.friendscamp.org/>

Providence Monthly Meeting - Contacts

Providence Meeting (401) 331-4218 <http://providencefriends.org>
99 Morris Avenue, Providence, RI 02906

Presiding Clerk: Mark Conley clerk@providencefriends.org
Assistant Presiding Clerk: Betsy Zimmerman assistclerk@providencefriends.org
Recording Clerk: Betsy Cazden recordingclerk@providencefriends.org
Treasurer: Peter Swaszek treasurer@providencefriends.org
Ministry & Counsel: Dan Lederer ministryandcounsel@providencefriends.org
Pastoral Care Committee: Dieter Gomes pastoralcare@providencefriends.org
Finance: Bruce Carlsten finance@providencefriends.org
Peace & Social Concerns: Dede Carlsten peaceandsocial@providencefriends.org
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Religious Education: Kathi Lyons religioused@providencefriends.org
Communications: Debbie Block communications@providencefriends.org
Program Committee: Sarah Baily program@providencefriends.org
Marriage Clearness: Erin Hazlett marriage@providencefriends.org
Library: Sarah Morenon library@providencefriends.org
Archive: archivist@providencefriends.org
Property: Bob Elliott and Lee Jaspers property@providencefriends.org
Funeral & Burial: Matt Hackman funeralandburial@providencefriends.org
Newsletter: Steve Schwartz providentfriend@providencefriends.org
Listserv Moderator: Dan Lederer list@providencefriends.org
Website: Dave McNab webclerk@providencefriends.org
Moses Brown School Liaison: Thia Lord liaison@providencefriends.org
Young Adult Friends: Stephen Higa yaf@providencefriends.org
To schedule the Meetinghouse: Bruce Shaw scheduling@providencefriends.org
AFSC SENE: Martha Yager (508) 399-6699 or myager@afsc.org or www.afsc.org/sene
Adult Education: Dave McNab adult_ed@providencefriends.org



Elizabeth Bonner Zimmerman

Newsletter of
Providence Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of
Friends

(401) 331-4218 or <http://providencefriends.org>

Meeting for Worship each Sunday

Providence: 10:00 am Saylesville: 10:30 am
Jamestown: 10:30 am

First Day School, Providence - Sunday. Children join Meeting for Worship from 10:00-10:15 am and then proceed to First Day School from 10:15-11:00 am.

Other Meetings for Worship (All welcome):

Monday - 12:30pm - Moses Brown Upper School

Wednesday - 8:25am - Moses Brown Lower School

Wednesday - 9:40am - Moses Brown Middle School

Wednesday – 7pm – Young Adult Friends at
116 Waterman St. (yaf@providencefriends.org)

Thursday - Noon-12:45 pm Brown University in
J. Walter Wilson room 411

Potluck, Providence - each First Sunday

Meeting for Business

Providence: Second Sunday each month at 12:15pm
Saylesville: Last Sunday of each month

AFSC SENE Support Committee - Second Tuesday, 6:30-
9:00 pm Volunteers needed and welcome.
Call (508) 399-6699

January 2 - noon walk with Eugenia Marks

Sense your relationships to community, the natural world, moral being: bundle up for a walk along the East Bay bike path, Sunday, January 2, noon – 2. Depart from and return to Meeting House; carpooling available. Questions? See Eugenia Marks.



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