

The Provident FRIEND

Dec 2011

Providence Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

Saylesville – Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

The very beautiful annual Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, a meeting for worship, will be held at the Saylesville Meetinghouse at 4:30 PM on Saturday, December 24. We encourage that you bring candles and candle holders, and finger-foods to share afterward. All are welcome.



Expanding Bookswap at Saylesville – from Joanne Griffin

The monthly bookswap format at Saylesville every third Saturday is expanding. This event was originally intended to help the larger community become aware of the meetinghouse in their midst, and to demonstrate what can happen when we share resources. We started with books, and it has taken a few years, but the event now has a life of its own, bringing 30 to 50 readers each month during the two hour time frame.

Recently, one of our next door neighbors offered to teach loom knitting to those interested. Keeping our doors open on the same day made the most sense for our best use of time. The day now starts with the bookswap from 10 to 12 in the morning, continues with pot luck lunch, and ends with classes from 1 to 3 in the afternoon. We are now calling the event our "Book Swap and Open House".

(cont. pg 7)

Young Friends Examine Living Simply - by Dylan Block-Harley

Living simply that others may simply live is no small task. In Young Friends this past month we've been discussing the testimony of simplicity, and I'd like to share one exercise we used as a way to ground discussion. Make a list of everything you have – however you interpret that prompt. Now, make a list of everything you need. Here are a few things we noticed as a group: Our need list is much shorter than our have list. Our have list is mostly material, our need list mostly emotional, spiritual and focused on sustenance. The difference between these lists begs an important question: Why do we have all of these things we don't need? More importantly, what are we going to do about it?

Calendar

(2011)

Dec 24 Sat: 4:30 pm (p1) Traditional Candlelight Worship at Saylesville Meeting House.

Dec. 25 Sun (Christmas Day): * There will be NO Nursery room coverage at the Providence Meeting House. There MAY NOT be Sacred Harp Sing (see p4).

Dec 27-30: (p4) Young Friends Retreat, Littleton, MA.

(2012)

Jan 5-8: (p4) YAF Mid-Winter Retreat, New Bedford Meeting.

Jan 8: 11:30 singing followed by 12:15 Meeting For Business, Providence Meeting House

Jan 8: 1:30-4pm. Moses Brown Open House

Jan. 21: 10am-3pm (p1) Bookswap and Open House, Saylesville Meeting House.

Jan. 22: 3-6pm (p4) Sacred Harp Sing at Providence Meeting House.

Jan. 28: Evening - (p4) Friendly Eights

Jan 29: 4pm – 5pm Prayer Service, St. Mary & St. Mena Coptic Orthodox Church of Rhode Island

Providence Monthly Meeting for Business Minutes - 11 Twelfth Month 2011

1. The meeting convened at 12:20 pm at the Providence meetinghouse with twelve Friends present. In the opening worship, the clerk read a Query on simplicity from the Children's Queries of Pacific Yearly Meeting:

Do I recognize when I have enough? Do I want all the toys I see on TV, even though my room is full?

2. Announcements:

This year's holiday gathering will be the 17th of 12th month at the Providence meetinghouse. If you would like to share a song, poem, story, personal recollection or inspirational reading, please contact John Lord.

Saylesville will host the traditional candlelight worship at 4:30 pm on 24th of 12th month.

3. The clerk reported that the membership transfer of William Manning ("Tad") Jose Jr. to the Alexandria, Virginia, Monthly Meeting has been completed.

4. Anne DiMase, Recorder, reported that our member Elizabeth D. Kirk has requested transfer of her membership to Swannanoa Valley Friends Meeting in Black Mountain, North Carolina. Friends see no reason not to proceed with this transfer.

5. The clerk reminded us that it is the practice of this meeting that the clerk proposes the Nominating committee. The clerk reported that Elsie Morse and Betsy Zimmerman have agreed to serve. Friends approve these names. The clerk expects to bring at least one additional name at a future meeting.

6. For Ministry and Counsel, Dan Lederer presented a proposal for worship-sharing, scheduled for the 26th of 2d month after the rise of meeting, regarding our relationship to Friends United Meeting (FUM), following up on our earlier deliberations. Advance materials would be provided, including information from the 2011 sessions of New England Yearly Meeting. It was suggested that before the worship-sharing we might invite one of the current NEYM representatives to the FUM General Board to speak and answer questions about the current situation in FUM regarding its personnel policy. There is also a concern that the session not be too long, so that people will be willing to stay for it, and that our focus needs to be on this community's response.

We approve this proposal in general, and ask Ministry and Counsel to consider whether it would be useful and possible to have a brief presentation and time for questions preceding the worship-sharing. We also ask that the background materials be available well in advance.

7. For the oversight committee, Bob Elliott reported that the marriage of Willis Monroe and Haley Lacis took place as scheduled on the 8th of Tenth month, according to the good order of Friends.

8. Treasurer's Report: Peter Swaszek gave a report on the first six months of the fiscal year. Contributions are running slightly behind the same period last year. Expenses are about normal for the time of year. The stated value of our investments is down, reflecting a valuation as of 9/30/11. He noted that the Finance Committee has approved minor overruns in the cost of insurance on the buildings and in supplies. Peter reminded us that there is still money available in the David Smith bequest for "enhancements."

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

9. Saylesville: Joanne Griffin reported that the monthly book swap has been growing in scope, especially attracting families. A large number of children's books, including some new ones, have been dropped off just in time for Christmas giving. Participants have been sharing skills especially of various crafts. One project has been turning recycled Christmas cards into tree ornaments, which will be given out after the Christmas eve service. Friends are encouraged to save Christmas cards they receive, for next year's projects. The meetinghouse is now in use well into the afternoon on swap days. This seems to be a valued service to the surrounding community.

10. We closed at about 1:20 pm following a period of grateful silence, intending to meet again, God willing, the 8th of 1st month 2012.

Mark Conley, clerk

Elizabeth Cazden, recording clerk



Rhode Island
next summer:
Beaches
Quaker Roots
and...
the FGC
Gathering!

July 1 to 7
University of
Rhode Island
Kingston, RI

All God's Critters
Got A Place
In the Choir

Request your Advance Program
today at www.FGCgathering.org

FGC
NURTURING FAITH AND
QUAKER PRACTICE



Around the Meeting

Sacred Harp Singing Dec 25?, Jan. 22– Every 4th Sunday (Providence Meetinghouse) from 3:00 to 6:00 PM, join us and make a joyful noise. December’s sing would be Christmas Day, and may be cancelled or rescheduled. See Bob Elliott for details.

Walk Jan 1 - Begin the New Year with a Walk. Bracing, beautiful winter beckons. After pot luck, from Providence meeting house. See Eugenia Marks.

Sing Before Meeting For Business (Jan. 8) - There will be singing before every Meeting For

Business. We gather at the piano at approximately 11:30 for 30-40 minutes. All are welcome, including instrumentalists.

Sacred Harp Singing Jan. 22 – (see at Dec 25).

Friendly Eights, Saturday Jan. 28 – This year’s second round of this event is now being planned. Please contact Sarah Bailey for information or if interested. A notice will be emailed soon.

Calendar Notes (Contact and other information about events ongoing and/or described in previous issues)

- Dec. 27-30 - Young Friends Retreats: **Quakerism & World Religions** Friendly Crossways, Littleton, MA
- January 5th -January 8th, 2012 YAF Mid-Winter Retreat “Led to Action” at New Bedford Monthly Meeting (MA)..
- Feb. 10-12 Diversity Wellesley Meeting, MA

For the above: To register or to find out more contact Nia Thomas - Nia@neym.org (617) 945-0373

Singing Here and There

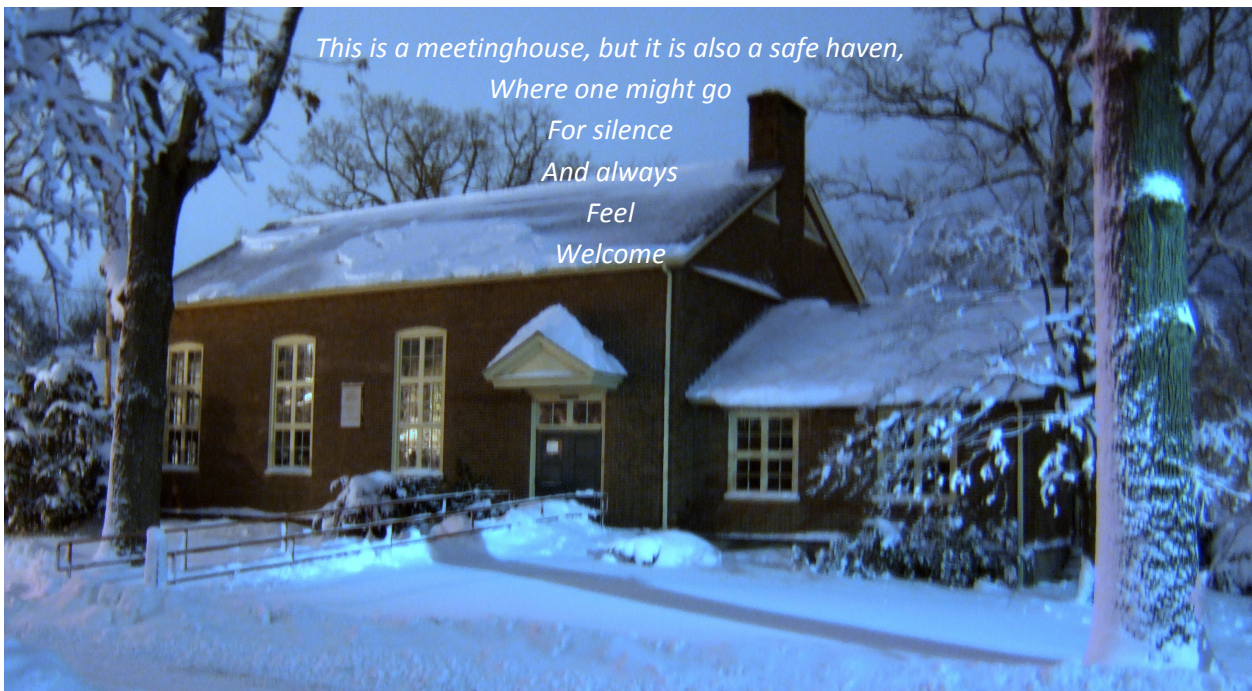


Music happens everywhere – every human culture found, no matter how isolated, has its own music. On December 10 at The Lincoln School, Bill Harley gave two benefit concerts for the RI Food Bank. This has become an annual event, and we’re glad we can share Erin’s photos of it – along with this one of singing in the meetinghouse.



Inside the Meetinghouse by Cassandra Schifman

*The heavy doors are open wide, inviting me to look inside
I peer nervously into the meetinghouse, look a little closer, and I see
White washed benches with soft green colored cushions that glimmer ever so slightly in the light
Oak circles of honey colored light suspended from the high ceiling by shining brass poles
I see windows, and doors, and, in one corner, a small, dark wooden table with tissues on it
But most of all,
I see people.
Many kinds of people.
Maybe there is a man with his eyes closed
Or a women with her fussy children,
Or a girl in the corner, swinging her legs and counting windows
4,8,12,16 she counts
All sit, bathing in the silence and the mutual feeling that GOD is with them there
No matter what they call this feeling,
Jesus,
Or God,
Or the light,
Whether their God is simple
Or complex,
Human,
Or Divine,
Or simply a spirit present in the hearts of the community
No matter what they believe, they feel personally invited here.
They feel part of a community, loved and respected for their own gifts and talents,*



December 17 Christmas Gathering – Providence Meeting House



Expanding Bookswap at Saylesville (cont. from pg 1)

We now get families coming, which is a perfect opportunity to introduce other activities. Last month we put a table in the middle of the meeting room and offered to show the children how to make bookmarks as Christmas gifts for their family and friends, by using the previous year's Christmas cards. Adults were shown how to make gift tags and containers for Christmas gifts using recycled materials. This month we are featuring tree ornaments and handmade snowflakes [see pictures sprinkled throughout these pages].

Providence Friends have so many talents to share, and so do the people who are coming to our doors. Do you have skills and creative activities to share? We are finding this sharing to be contagious, and invite you to come be a part of the fun of this community outreach opportunity.

LIST OF MATERIALS YOU CAN PUT ASIDE FOR US TO USE IN THESE ENDEAVORS:

- Colored paper from your recycling bin (envelopes and light cardboard are fine)
- Your Christmas cards
- Your left over yarn scraps
- Knitting needles and crochet hooks no longer used

ATTENTION!! - Has anyone seen the binder with past newsletters in it that was in the library? It has been misplaced, possibly during renovations. If anyone has any clue to its whereabouts, Please contact Dan Lederer.

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: Debbie Block 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: Judy Shaw pastoralcare@providencefriends.org
- Finance: Bill Monroe finance@providencefriends.org
- Peace & Social Concerns: Dede Carlsten peaceandsocial@providencefriends.org
- Social & Hospitality: Zona Douthit socialandhospitality@providencefriends.org
- Religious Education: Kathi Lyons religioused@providencefriends.org
- Communications: Dan Lederer 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
- Email list moderator: Dan Lederer list@providencefriends.org
- Website: Dave McNab webclerk@providencefriends.org
- Moses Brown School Liaison: Willis Monroe 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

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

Wednesday - 8:25am - Moses Brown Lower School

Wednesday - 9:40am - Moses Brown Middle School

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

A note regarding the original poem on page 5

Here is the poem my daughter shared with the Meeting at the annual Christmas gathering. One First Day, after announcements, she turned to me and asked if she could read something. I said yes, assuming she would pick some small passage from one of her favorite books. The original composition that she read was completely unprompted and largely unknown to her mother and I until she read it this Saturday, though we did get a sneak peek at few minutes before the gathering started. We are, of course, very proud of her and thank you all for your kind words following the reading. Best wishes for a happy holiday.

Sam Schifman

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A Repeated Thanks to Andrea Starr for again helping with this month's newsletter, help very much appreciated.

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