

## Providence Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

### *Annual Holiday Gathering - 5pm Saturday December 14*

Come join us for the annual Providence Friends Meeting Holiday Gathering on Saturday December 14th at 5pm at the meetinghouse. Experience this year's First Day School version of the Nativity Story. The gathering starts with an hour of singing, performances and some silent worship followed by a festive potluck.

Please consider adding your talents! If you're interested in performing music or a song solo or duet, poem or reading or story, play or otherwise, please contact John (cont. P.5)

### **Bill Harley Benefit Performances – 11am & 2 pm Sat. Nov 17**

Dear Friends,

Our annual concert to "Sing Away Hunger" will be held at Lincoln School on Saturday, November 16th, with shows at 11am and 2pm. Please come (even if you don't have children to bring!!) - we promise a great time.

You can purchase tickets at this link:

<http://www.rifoodbank.org/NewsEvents/SingAwayHunger/tabid/260/Default.aspx>

Thanks! Debbie Block and Bill Harley

### **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 Tuesday, December 24. We encourage that you bring candles and candle holders, and finger-foods to share afterward. All are welcome.

### **Worship Sharing - Sunday Nov 17 noon**

There will be a Worship Sharing at the Providence Meetinghouse at noon on Sunday, November 17. Over recent months everyone at Meeting has become aware that, around 60 years ago, child sexual abuse occurred within one of the families in our Meeting community. Ministry and Counsel has spent the better part of this last year reflecting on what might have happened, how this should be made known to everyone, how we can acknowledge the damage and pain that remains, and how we can make our Meeting a safe and supportive community. As you already know, we have provided information to Friends about the mandatory reporting of suspected child abuse that is required in Rhode Island, and we have reviewed and modified our Meeting Handbook to include this information.

Beyond this, we believe that it would serve us well to come together to reflect on our Meeting Community and how we can make it a safe place for all of us and for all of our families. So our Worship Sharing will explore the following queries: What more can we, as individuals and as a Meeting, do to ensure a supportive and safe community for both children and adults? What does Living in the Truth mean for us as Friends?

Calendar (also see p4)

**Nov 16 Sat:** 10am-12pm  
Saylesville Bookswap

**Nov 16 Sat:** 11am and 2pm  
(two shows) (p1) Bill Harley  
benefit performances, Lincoln  
School.

**Nov 17 Sun:** 12:00 (p2)  
Worship Sharing, "Creating a  
Safe Community", Providence  
Meeting House

**Nov 17 Sun:** (p2) Community  
music event, Saylesville

**Nov 24 Sun:** 3-6pm Sacred  
Harp Sing at Providence  
Meeting House

**Nov 28 Thur:** [tentative: see  
p4] Thanksgiving Day Potluck,  
Providence Meeting House

**Nov 29 Fri:** (p 6) Winter Coat  
Drive, State House and other  
places.

**Dec 6 Fri:** 8pm (p4) Brown  
University Chorus Messiah  
Sing, First Church of Christ  
Scientist

**Dec 8 Sun:** 12:00 (p2) Meeting  
For Business, Providence  
Meeting House

**Dec 8 Sun:** 4pm (p4) Brown  
University Chorus Lessons And  
Carols, Sayles Hall

**Dec 14 Sat:** 5pm (p1) Holiday  
Gathering, Providence  
Meeting House

**Dec 22 Sun:** 3-6pm Sacred  
Harp Sing at Providence  
Meeting House

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

**Dec 27-30:** (p4) Woolman Hill  
Winter Silence event.

**Jan 15 Wed:** 7pm Movie Night  
at Providence Meeting House

**Providence Monthly Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business  
Minutes – 10th Eleventh Month, 2013**

1. We gathered at 12:05 pm at the Providence meetinghouse, with 25 present. In the opening worship the clerk read the following advice, from the NEYM Faith & Practice (preliminary approval 2012):

No one human being or group has the full measure of the Light. Seek to understand the experience of those whose theology and practices differ from your own. Take opportunities to enter into prayer and work with the wider community of faith. Find ways to articulate your own faith so that it may be shared with others.

2. Announcements:

- There will be a Worship Sharing at noon on 11th mo. 17 at the Providence Meetinghouse. The queries to be explored will be: What more can we, as individuals and as a Meeting, do to ensure a supportive and safe community for both children and adults? What does Living in the Truth mean for us as Friends?
- If there is enough interest, there will be a Thanksgiving Day dinner (11th mo. 28) at the Providence Meetinghouse. Contact Betsy Cazden if you would like to participate.
- The Meeting Christmas Gathering will be on 12th mo. 14 at 5:00 pm, followed by a potluck meal. Contact John Lord if you would like to perform.
- Saylesville will host its usual candlelight worship at 4:30 pm on 12th mo. 24, followed by light refreshments.

3. Membership transfer: Richard Ristow has requested transfer of his membership to the Friends Meeting at Cambridge (MA). We approve this transfer with regret and with gratitude for Richard's long service to and participation in this meeting.

4. Other membership matters: Recorder Anne DiMase reported that our member Robert Jenkins is deceased (2012). Darrin Gomes has found another religious home outside the area and his membership should be discontinued. We approve this discontinuance.

5. Peace and Social Concerns: Mark Conley, new clerk of the committee, reported that the committee has resumed regular meetings. They see Peace & Social Concerns as a spiritual practice, discerning what things the committee and the meeting can and should be doing,

The committee has been working with the Religious Education Committee on a program to help high school and Young Adult Friends discern their response to the ongoing requirement for men to register for Selective Service (draft), including helping them develop conscientious objection files. The committee has begun discussion with Moses Brown School about doing outreach on this issue, which affects young people's eligibility for college financial aid.

The committee is also seeking clarity on what it may be called to do on sustainability, gun control, and stewardship of financial resources and investments.

Mark noted that the committee sees its role as "making the meeting uncomfortable," and looks forward to working with all of us.

Phebe Howland, Barbara Zimmer, and Michael Hirtle have agreed to serve on the committee. We approve. Mike Hirtle has agreed to serve as liaison between the P&SC Committee and the Finance Committee.

6. Saylesville: Joanne Griffin reported that the preparative meeting will be hosting a community music program on the 17th of this month; they regret the conflict with the worship-sharing, but had already sent publicity out so are unable to change the date or time. There is a problem with the heating system, which they are working with Property Committee to resolve. Saylesville invites Friends to assist with bagging up leaves, to save paying someone to haul them away.

(cont. p3)

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

7. The meeting closed with worship at 12:45 pm, intending to meet next on the 8th of 12th month, at the Providence meetinghouse, God willing.

Daniel Lederer, Clerk

Elizabeth Cazden, Recording Clerk

### Items of Interest From the Finance Committee - from Bill Monroe

The Finance Committee would like to know whether members and attenders would be interested in making automatic donations to the Meeting from their bank accounts (or credit cards). Some members currently do this by having checks sent from their bank accounts on a regular schedule (monthly or quarterly). This could also be done electronically, although the Meeting may need to pay a fee to receive such payments. If there is enough interest, however, it may be worthwhile to set up something like this. If you are interested in doing this, please let us know. You can contact the Treasurer (Peter Swaszek) or the Clerk of the Finance Committee (William Monroe).

We are also looking into changing some of our investments, and thought this might provide a good occasion for a wider discussion of socially responsible investing. We would like to hold such a discussion after meeting for worship sometime in December and want to extend an invitation to any members or attenders who are interested. Whether you already have investments and would like to share your experience, or are interested in making some investments and would like to benefit from others' expertise, please come. We will announce the date soon.

### Restricted Donations, Revisited by Dan Lederer

I'm writing once again in regard to Meeting's contribution to Friends United Meeting (FUM). This is the season of the year when many of us are thinking about making charitable donations. As always, Providence Monthly Meeting welcomes donations, since they represent a major source of income for our various activities.

Under normal circumstances, donations to PMM go into the general fund and are distributed proportionally among our expenses. However, in 2010 Meeting for Business approved a minute allowing contributors, if they so wish, to specify that they would prefer that no part of their donation go to Friends United Meeting. Please note that this restriction applies only to FUM and not to any of the other non-profit organizations to which we contribute. At Sessions this summer, NEYM approved allowing its constituent meetings to continue this arrangement for another year. (We do not contribute directly to FUM; our contribution is made through NEYM).

If you choose to restrict your donation in this way, we are asking that you communicate this to our treasurer, Peter Swaszek, by means of a note accompanying your check or even with just a notation on your check saying "Not to FUM". This same restriction can be applied retroactively to donations you made earlier during this fiscal year (June 1, 2013 through May 31, 2014), again just as long as you notify Peter in writing that this is your preference. Peter will take that portion of your donation which would have gone to FUM, 0.58%, and place it in a fund designated for charitable use in the future. The total amount that we send to FUM (as a portion of our contribution to NEYM) will be reduced by that amount, and NEYM will reduce their contribution to FUM by that same amount. There will be no reduction in the financial support that NEYM receives from us for its own use; the reduction will be only in the amount they would have sent to FUM.

Because Peter needs to complete his payments according to our approved budget before the end of our fiscal year, we are asking that Friends who wish to exercise this option make their donations before April 15, 2014. Conversely, anyone who feels moved to make a direct contribution to FUM is encouraged to do so. Their address is Friends United Meeting, 101 Quaker Hill Drive, Richmond, IN 47374. Contributions to our Meeting, restricted or not, can be made to Providence Friends Meeting and sent to Peter Swaszek at 57 Brayton Street, East Greenwich, RI 02818.

## Around the Meeting

### More Rides Needed:

John Gaffney has let us know that he is in need of rides to meeting. He lives across from the

Providence Train Station at the Avalon at Center Place, 50 Park Row West. He suggested that the best way to handle

rides is for someone to come to his apartment building, park, and then drive his van (with him in it) to Meeting. He can be

reached at 401-215-5302 and at [johnkgaffney@gmail.com](mailto:johnkgaffney@gmail.com)

## Bill Monroe Performances

Bill Monroe is playing at several venues in November and December:

Friday, November 15 — 8-10 pm Cafe Tango (with Matteo Casini) Somerville, MA

Friday, November 22 – 8-8:45pm Coffee Depot open Mic (featured act with Matteo Casini) Warren, RI

Saturday, December 14, 8-10:20 pm Church Street Coffee House (with the Providence Wholebellies)

Dancing, \$12 admission at the door, refreshments available. First United Methodist Church, Warren, RI

Contact bill for more information. to hear some samples of some music, visit: [www.wsmonroe.com/music](http://www.wsmonroe.com/music)

## Thanksgiving Day Potluck Uncertain

There have been no responses to Betsy Cazden's notice about a Thanksgiving Day potluck meal at the Providence Meetinghouse. It is likely not going to happen unless Betsy receives a significant response very soon.

## Messiah Sing \* Brown University Chorus \* Lessons and Carols

Friday December 6 8:00pm

1<sup>st</sup> Church of Christ Scientist

Sunday December 8 4:00pm

Sayles Hall (Brown Main Green)

The Brown University Chorus will be performing in two events related to the spiritual aspects of this holiday season. This year's performance of the Christmas portion of Handel's "Messiah" is a sing-along version. The audience sings the choral parts with the chorus, and soloists sing the arias, all accompanied by Baroque strings and trumpets, organ, and percussion. You don't have to sing, you can just listen. Some scores are provided, but please bring your own if you have one. The First Church of Christ Scientist is at 71 Prospect St, Providence (corner of Meeting Street).

On Sunday, Dec. 8 (4pm), we sing a variety of pieces interspersed in the University's "Lessons And Carols" event, which is open to the public. This beautiful candle-lit event is in Sayles Hall, on the Main Green of Brown University, entrance at the corner of Waterman and Brown Streets. Contact Steve Schwartz for information.

## On The Horizon: Future Events – Events that recur and/or happen beyond the next month

[month in brackets indicates a recent issue that has an article about this event]

December 27-30, 2013: Winter Silence - Facilitator tba - Woolman Hill [Oct p 7]

January 15, 2014: (start of 4 week online course) Can A Meeting Do That? Freedom and Authority During 360 Years of Quakerism - On-line course led by Betsy Cazden - Woolman Hill [Oct p 7]

January 17-19, 2014: Corporate Discernment In Meeting For Business - Weekend workshop led by Nancy & David Haines - Woolman Hill [Oct p 7]

February 28-March 2, 2014: Mindful Mortality, with Rob Spencer - Woolman Hill [Oct p 7]

March 13-16, 2014: Writing Out of the Presence, with Ellen Michaud [Oct p 7 Woolman Hill]

March 28-30, 2014: Noticing God's Nudges In Our Lives: The Sacred Art of Individual Spiritual Discernment, weekend workshop led by Nancy Bieber - Woolman Hill [Oct p 7]

April 4-6, 2013: Couple Enrichment, Mary Kay Glazer & Mark Moss, Carol & Peter Letson - Woolman Hill [Oct p 7]

June 19-22, 2014: Summer Solstice Retreat, facilitators TBA - Woolman Hill [Oct p 7]

## Peace and Social Concerns Report

*Friends are called, as followers of Christ, to help establish the Kingdom of God on earth. Let us strengthen a sense of kinship with everyone. Let that sense of kinship inspire us in our efforts to build a social order free of violence and oppression, in which no person's development is thwarted by poverty and the lack of health care, education or freedom. Friends are advised to minister to those in need but also to seek to know the facts and the causes of social and economic ills and to work for the removal of those ills. Let us cherish every human being and encourage efforts to overcome all forms of prejudice. - NEYM 1985 Faith and Practice, pg. 209*

As the newly appointed clerk of Peace and Social Concerns, the committee has asked me to write an article as often as possible for our newsletter. I am especially pleased that they requested that each of these articles begin with a quote from our yearly meeting's Faith and Practice, or from another yearly's as the Spirit moves.

This month I open with the quote we shared in our opening committee worship for the year. As you will read in the minutes for Meeting for Business, we have been concerned for the increasing militarization and violence in our society. We have committed to helping our youth develop their conscientious objection files as they see fit. In that process, we have discovered that many of us in Meeting are woefully uninformed regarding the laws governing Selective Service. We hope to educate all Friends as to these laws and their consequences for our high-school aged and young adult friends, particularly our young men, whose eligibility for federal financial aid is contingent upon their registration.

We are also working on issues of finance and personal responsibility. In what ways do our uses of our fiscal resources speak to our testimonies? Do we have the knowledge we need to manage our money in a way consistent with our beliefs?

Our last expressed concern revolved around matters concerning gun control. The leading to consider this in our committee was clearly expressed, though we have not yet considered in what ways we will bring this issue forward in the coming months.

We are painfully aware that any list of concerns will leave out crucial matters of peace and justice. We rely on divine guidance to discern what we can do corporately in committee and what we can bring forward to the wider Meeting community as we continue our work. Friends and attenders are always welcome to approach us and share their concerns, ideas, prayers and yes – even frustrations. There is much to do to alleviate suffering in the world. What is given us as our portion to do, even as we value and honor the work of others who go where we cannot? We hope to bring items forward that will give the Meeting reason to consider our testimonies and our witness to them. In the meantime, we ask that you hold us in the Light as we continue our work of discernment in the coming months.

Mark Conley, clerk

Peace and Social Concerns Committee

## *Holiday Gathering (cont'd from p 1)*

Lord, who coordinates the schedule. John writes "I don't want to assume that, if you contributed in the past, you will automatically contribute this year. This is also a reminder to instrumentalists in 'Sounds of Silence,' our annual orchestra. You have about 5 weeks to locate your instrument." Please let him know if you are available and if you need sheet music. All are welcome.

Closer to the time there will be a signup for potluck. The usual process is for those who can to help set up for dinner to arrive by 4. Centerpieces or greens for the tables are welcome, and food for the potluck dinner at 6 can be kept warm or cooked in the oven during the program.

Please mark your calendars for what is sure to be a wonderful evening. We hope to see you there.

## CLERK'S CORNER by Dan Lederer

### The Provident Friend

Meeting's newsletter, The Provident Friend, enjoys a circulation of more than 400 readers, about 85% of whom receive it electronically, the rest by regular mail. It's a valuable asset for our Meeting because:

- It effectively publicizes upcoming events in the life of the Meeting.
- It allows us to report on events that have already occurred, including our monthly Meeting for Business.
- It provides a forum for Friends to share ideas.
- It serves, for historical reference, as a record of Meeting's activities.
- It functions as a goodwill ambassador to the wider community, especially for those who request information about our Meeting.

Thanks to a series of fine editors - Penny Jackim, Nina Berry, and currently Steve Schwartz - our newsletter has performed all these functions well over the years, following Joseph Pulitzer's exhortation to "put it before them briefly so they will read it, clearly so they will appreciate it, picturesquely so they will remember it and, above all, accurately so they will be guided by its light." However, the newsletter could be even better with more contributions from members and attenders. A Clerk's Corner column in November 2012 asked readers to consider sharing their spiritual "moments of clarity" via the newsletter. But that's only one of many ways one can contribute to the newsletter's content. It would be of interest to Friends to hear from our various committees in regard to what they're doing, which may inspire some readers to join in a particular committee's activities. How about a description of an experience you've had, or an especially good book you've read? Or you might want to comment on something you saw in a previous issue via a letter to the editor. Photos, art work, or your original poetry may find a place in the newsletter.

Communications Committee doesn't have a staff of reporters; instead, I hope you, the readers, will consider yourselves to be our newsletter's reporters. Let's make The Provident Friend a Meeting-wide enterprise that reflects the diversity, skills, and talents of our members and attenders. It can be a way for us to get to know each other better and thereby strengthen our community. Send your submissions to [providentfriend@providencefriends.org](mailto:providentfriend@providencefriends.org) and see your byline in print!

### **Celebrate "Buy Nothing Day" and contribute to the annual Winter Coat Drive**

**"If you have a coat to give, please drop it off. If you need a coat, please pick one up."**

Some see Buy Nothing Day [aka "Black Friday"] as an escape from the marketing mind games and the frantic consumer binge that has come to characterize the holiday season. Others use it to expose the environmental and ethical consequences of over-consumption. In Rhode Island, as part of International Buy Nothing Day, we hold a winter coat exchange in various locations around the state, where people who can donate coats do so, and people who need coats pick them up. Volunteers are needed to help with this life-affirming event.

Winter coats that you no longer wear can bring comfort to a needy person. The annual Coat Exchange is scheduled for the day after Thanksgiving. Please bring donated coats and jackets to Meeting not later than Nov 24. Items can also be left on the enclosed porch at 11 Methyl Street, Providence. There are also places all over the state where coats can be donated, including Pawtucket, Newport, East Providence, Seekonk, and Hope Artiste Villlage Farmer's Markets. For any questions, see Eugenia Marks.

### **Winter Schedule at Conanicut (Jamestown) Meeting**

During the winter, the Conanicut Meeting For Worship is held every other week at the Norman Bird Sanctuary, at 10:00 am. For further information, contact Marcia Lindsay at [pwomba1@cox.net](mailto:pwomba1@cox.net)

## Hello From Saylesville Preparatory Meeting

Good Day Friends,

This missive comes to you from the from the outskirts of the PMM, namely the Saylesville Preparatory Meeting . The Season of Light is coming upon us and this means an annual invite to the Saylesville Meeting House for a Candlelight Worship. Open to all members and attenders of the PMM, this worship is also for all religious societies and for the general public. Those of us at Saylesville Preparatory Meeting would like everyone to know that our doors are open not only on Christmas Eve, but all year through.

SPM requests your presence at our worship on any First Day that Way seems to draw you to us. We are a small worship group and are a very close worship group because of our size. It is easy to know what concerns people face in their lives when they share their concerns at a coffee hour within a small gathering. We do not intend to be intrusive into people's lives; however, we are supportive to members who wish to share their concerns, and we act as a small "healthy" family in offering encouragement and prayer.

To describe our worship group in any way compared to the larger Providence worship group seems futile. At a recent Meeting for Business the query was discussed as to how to encourage more interaction between Saylesville and Providence. What came out of that discussion was the fact that SPM is open to welcoming any friends, attenders, and members who wish to join us for First Day Meeting. Carpooling and other means were discussed, but at this point in time we are open to allowing Way to lead you to us.

Hoping to see you all soon,

Cindy Fanning and the entire SPM

## Providence Monthly Meeting - Contacts

**Providence Meeting** (401) 331-4218 <http://providencelfriends.org>  
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 Moses Brown School Liaison: Willis Monroe [liaison@providencelfriends.org](mailto:liaison@providencelfriends.org)  
 Young Adult Friends: (To Be Named) [yaf@providencelfriends.org](mailto:yaf@providencelfriends.org)  
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 AFSC SENE: Martha Yager (508) 399-6699 or [myager@afsc.org](mailto:myager@afsc.org) or  
[www.afsc.org/sene](http://www.afsc.org/sene)  
 Adult Religious Education: Zona Douthit [adulsted@providencelfriends.org](mailto:adulsted@providencelfriends.org)



Elizabeth Bonner Zimmerman

Newsletter of  
Providence Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of  
Friends  
(401) 331-4218 or <http://providencefriends.org>

## Seasonal Events

### Meeting for Worship each Sunday

Providence: 10:00 am      Saylesville: 10:30 am  
Conanicut (Jamestown) winter: 10 am alt. Sundays

**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](mailto:yaf@providencefriends.org))

**Wednesday** - 8:25am - Moses Brown Lower School

**Wednesday** - 9:40am - Moses Brown Middle School

**Wednesday** - 10-11:30am 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Wed's - Saylesville

**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 12:00pm  
Saylesville: Second Sunday of each month at 9:30am

**AFSC SENE Support Committee** - Second Tuesday, 6:30-9:00 pm  
Volunteers needed and welcome.

*Nov 16 Sat - Bill Harley benefit concert (p 1)*

*Nov 28 Thurs - Probably NO Thanksgiving  
potluck (p 4)*

*Nov 29 Fri - Winter Coat Drive (p 6)*

*Dec 6 Fri - Messiah Sing-along (p 4)*

*Dec 8 Sun - Lessons and Carols (p 4)*

*Dec 14 Sat - Annual Holiday Gathering (p 1)*

*Dec 24 Tues - Candlelight Worship at  
Saylesville (p 1)*

## The Provident FRIEND

Newsletter of  
Providence Monthly Meeting of the  
Religious Society of Friends  
99 Morris Avenue  
Providence, RI 02906