

The Provident FRIEND

Nov 2014

Providence Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

Christmas Holiday Gathering - 5pm Saturday December 13

Come join us for the annual Providence Friends Meeting Holiday Gathering on Saturday December 13th 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 (cont p5)

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service at Saylesville

Saylesville Meeting invites everyone to join us in our annual Christmas Eve Candlelight Service that has been held every year for forty years. This beautiful candlelight service is held in the manner of the traditional unprogrammed meeting for worship. It begins at 4:30pm at the Saylesville Friends Meetinghouse, 374 Great Road, Lincoln, RI. (cont p 5)

First Day School Holiday Giving Opportunities and Camp Street Thanksgiving

Share Holidays with Heifer International or Local Families

In connection with our focus on Stewardship of the Earth, First Day School invites donations to Heifer International, that provides farm animals to help sustain families around the world. Gifts of animals range in price from chickens at \$20 to (cont p 7)

Celebrate "Buy Nothing Day" - 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 (cont p 5)

Nov 16 – Peace & Social Justice Event

We hope you will be able to join Peace and Social Concerns Committee as we welcome two speakers for our next Peace and Social Justice First Day, which will be November 16 at 11:30 AM at the Providence Meetinghouse. Because we hope to provide a balance between local concerns and global concerns, our topic this month will be the Israeli/Palestinian conflict. Our guest speaker s will be Judy Kaye, who is a co-chair of J Street RI, a group that advocates for peace in the region (<http://jstreet.org/>), and Jim Fine, former head of Ramallah Friends School and a long-time lobbyist for Friends Committee on National Legislation (<http://fcnl.org>). Our event will include steps you might take if you feel moved to learn more or take action. If you have any questions about this month's event, please feel free to contact Mark Conley.

(Published November 12)

Calendar (also see p4 Events)

Nov. 12: (p6) AFSC-SENE recommended event

Nov. 12 Wed: 7pm (p4) Meeting Movie Night, Providence Meeting House.

Nov 14-16 Fri-Sun: (p4) Young Friends Retreat, Portland ME

Nov 15 Sat: 10am-12pm Saylesville Bookswap

Nov 15 Sat: (p4) 6-9pm Friendly Eights, various locations.

Nov 16 Sun: 11:30 am (p1) Peace and Social Justice event,

Nov 20-21: (p4) Quaker Public Policy Institute, Washington D.C.

Nov 23 Sun: 3-6pm Sacred Harp Sing at Providence Meeting House

Nov 25 Tues: (p5) 10:20am-11:10 All School Meeting, Moses Brown Field House

Dec 2 Tues: (p5) 3:15-4:15 Author Eval Press, Moses Brown School

Dec 3 Wed: (p4) 7-9pm Abolitionist talk, Rehoboth.

Dec 13 Sat: (p1) 5pm Holiday gathering, Providence Meeting House

Dec 19 Fri: (p5) 11am-12 All School Meeting, Moses Brown Field House

Dec 20 Sat: 10am-12pm Saylesville Bookswap

Dec 24 Wed: (p1) 4:30pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, Saylesville

Dec 27-30 Sat-Tues: (p4) Young Friends Retreat, Harvard MA

Dec 28 Sun: 3-6pm Sacred Harp Sing at Providence Meeting House

Jan 11 Sun: (p5) Open House, Moses Brown School

**Providence Monthly Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business
Minutes – 9 Eleventh Month, 2014**

1. We gathered at the Providence meetinghouse at 12:05 pm, with 23 present. In the opening silence the clerk read the following Advice from NEYM *Faith & Practice* (Interim 2012):

Remember that we are only able to act according to our present sense and judgment, in the faith that the light we are given is enough for our needs today. Let us be humble both with one another, and in anticipating that there may be more and different steps to take tomorrow.

2. Announcements:

Communication Committee's next Meeting Movie Night will be at 7:00 pm on Wednesday, November 12. The film to be shown is the classic 1952 Western "*High Noon*", which includes a marshal's newlywed Quaker wife as a prominent character faced with a dilemma about choosing violence to protect her new family.

3. For the Finance Committee, Mike Hirtle presented a proposed minute of advice for the NEYM Pooled Funds, responding to that body's request for guidance, which was read but not considered at last month's meeting for business. The statement was approved as amended to read as follows:

The Board of Managers should move to divest from fossil fuel related investments, but such divestment should take place in an orderly manner such that adverse economic impacts to the Pooled Funds are minimized. In addition, the Board of Managers should seek alternative energy investments that do not involve fossil fuels or contribute to global warming, and that minimize environmental damage.

4. Mike then presented again the "Global Investor Statement on Climate Change"

(<http://investorsonclimatechange.org/>) signed by several hundred fund managers and organizations, including Britain Yearly Meeting and its Quaker investment advisors. The Finance Committee brought this statement last month for information, and it has been circulated via the meeting e-mail list. The Finance Committee recommends that this meeting ask NEYM Pooled Funds to join as a signatory to this policy statement. Friends approved. A copy of the statement is appended to the record copy of these minutes in the Meeting Archives.

5. Membership: Elsie Morse, Co-Membership Recorder, reported that our member William Mize has informed us that he has joined another Friends meeting, but no transfer was processed at that time. He has now asked to be discontinued as a member here. We approve dropping his name from our list, and ask the clerk to send an appropriate note to the clerk of the other meeting informing them of our action and commending him to their care.

6. For Ministry and Counsel, David Bourns reported that we have received a transfer of membership from Friends Meeting of Louisville (KY) for Stephen Thomas, who has been attending our meeting regularly with his family. We are pleased to accept this transfer. We will welcome the Thomases at the next potluck, together with Jules Burrowes.

7. Finance Committee reported that the annual appeal letter will be sent out shortly.

8. Treasurer Peter Swaszek reported that the planned transfer of meeting funds from Pax World Fund to Friends Fiduciary Corporation has been completed.

9. Saylesville: Joanne Griffin reported that the memorial meeting for William Ruggiero was well attended and was appreciated.

10. As time permitted, the clerk opened the floor to hear concerns from Friends that should be addressed. One Friend asked if there is a group of people interested in reading and commenting on the draft *Faith and Practice*; we encourage those interested to find a time to do this and publicize it so that others may join in. We remind Friends that the interim text of sections given preliminary approval is available in the meeting library and online (pdf) at <http://neym.org/fp-revision/interim-faith-and-practice>.

11. We closed with a period of silence at about 1:00 pm, intending to meet next, God willing, the 14th of 12th month.

Daniel Lederer, Clerk

Elizabeth Cazden, Recording Clerk

Contemplative Groups In Providence *from Rebecca Helm*

After attending the International Symposium for Contemplative Studies organized by the Mind and Life Institute, which included a talk by the Dalai Lama, I felt inspired to share with the community several different opportunities to learn about and engage in a diversity of contemplative traditions here in Providence. These include:

- events and lectures hosted by the Contemplative Studies Initiative at Brown University (<http://brown.edu/academics/contemplative-studies/>)
- the Zen group at the First Unitarian Universalist Church (http://benevolentstreetzen.org/?page_id=117)
- secular meditation inspired by Tibetan Buddhist traditions (<http://foundationforactivecompassion.org/component/content/article/104>)

For further information or to discuss the topic and related possibilities, you can contact me at: rebecca.rae.helm@gmail.com [*ed note: Rebecca is a recent attendee at meeting, and a Ph.D. Candidate at Brown*]

Messiah Sing *	Brown University Chorus *	Lessons and Carols
Friday December 5 8:00pm	Sayles Hall (Brown Main Green)	Sunday December 7 4:00pm

The Brown University Chorus’ seasonal spiritually oriented performances are both in Sayles Hall this year. The Christmas portion of Handel’s “Messiah” will include a baroque orchestra and soloists from the chorus.

Brown University’s beautiful candle-lit “Lessons And Carols” event is open to the public. The chorus sings a variety of pieces interspersed with readings and carol singing by all. Sayles Hall is on the Main Green of Brown University, entrance at the corner of Waterman and Brown Streets. Contact Steve Schwartz for information.

Restricted Donations, Yet Again *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 5 years. (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, 2014 through May 31, 2015), 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, around a half of a percent, 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, 2015. 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

Updated Meeting Handbook is online – Dan emailed an updated Meeting Handbook (36 pgs) on Nov 3. It is also available on our website

(left side, click the Resources/Meeting Documents): www.providentfriends.org
Be Hospitable -

Hospitality Committee needs greeters, coffee set-up, food, and clean-up. See Dede to sign up.
New Door Reminder - :

The new exterior doors must be locked with a key from the outside. Please be mindful if you are the last to leave the building.

Small Apartment or Room Sought

Mary Barrett's daughter Betsy is staying in Providence for an extended period to help her mother. She is in need of a small apartment or even just a room in someone's home. She can be reached at: dhuti.elizabeth.ananda@gmail.com.

Meeting Movie Night – “High Noon” - Wed. Nov 12, 7pm

Communication Committee’s next Meeting Movie Night will be at 7:00 PM Wednesday, November 12. The film to be shown is the classic 1952 Western “High Noon”. Considered a classic film and having won 4 Academy Awards, its themes are relevant to Quakers today, as it queries a newlywed Quaker bride’s choices in the midst of a threatening and violent situation. This relates to events occurring now in the Middle East, and it should generate an interesting discussion.

Thanks From Hannah Monroe

Many thanks for the card and the chocolate that everyone at Providence Meeting sent me as a get well care package. It was so nice to have that support from the meeting and I really appreciate it.

Best,
 Hannah

Charles Sweigart in “The Visit” Nov 13-15 *from Adele Bourne*

Charles Sweigart has been appearing as the Mayor in "The Visit" at the Contemporary Theater, in Wakefield, RI. Remaining performances are Nov. 9 at 2 :00 pm and Nov. 13-15 at 7:00 pm. The theater is located at 327 Main St., South Kingston, RI, 02879. Call 401-218-0282 for tickets. Kevin Broccoli has adapted the original by Friedrich Durrenmatt. I first saw this play 56 years ago with Alfred Lunt and Lynne Fontanne as the first play produced at the new Lunt-Fontanne Theater. It ran for 189 performances and was the last appearance of the Lunts on Broadway, so I really want to see this version. If anyone would like a ride, email me - I plan to go on Friday, November 14. Break a leg, Charlie!
 Adele Bourne briefcndle@aol.com

Future Events – Events that recur and/or happen beyond the next month

[2014 unless noted, month in brackets indicates a recent issue that has an article about this event]

- Nov. 14-16 Young Friends retreat - Make Food, Art, Music (Not War!) Portland Meeting, ME [Sept p5]
- Nov 15 Friendly Eights (contact Ariana Steele 401-461-2168 or fancyoats@gmail.com [Oct p1]
- Nov. 20-21 Young Adult Friends Public Policy Institute, Washington DC [Oct p5]
- Dec. 3 Wed: 7-9pm Abolitionist talk, Rehoboth [Oct p5]
- Dec. 13 Sat: Holiday gathering, Providence Meeting House
- Dec. 27-30 Young Friends retreat - Different Forms of Quakerism Friendly Crossways, Harvard, MA [Sept p5]
- January 1-4, 2015 YAF (Young Adult Friends) retreat at Woolman Hill in Deerfield, MA [Sept p5]
- Feb. 13-15 Young Friends retreat - The Rejuvenation Retreat, Wellesley Meeting, MA [Sept p5]
- Mar. 20-22 Young Friends retreat - Relationships, Sexuality & Gender, Hartford Meeting, CT [Sept p5]
- May 8-10 Young Friends retreat - Transitions: Change and Purpose, Westport Meeting, MA [Sept p5]

“Buy Nothing Day” - Annual Winter Coat Drive (cont from p 1)

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.

Warm clothing that you no longer wear can bring comfort to a needy person. The Coat Exchange is the day after Thanksgiving, so please bring donated coats and jackets to Meeting not later than Nov 23 (there is a box downstairs). Items can also be left on the enclosed porch at 11 Methyl Street, Providence, and there are places all over the state where coats can be donated, including Pawtucket, Newport, East Providence, Seekonk, and Hope Artiste Village Farmer’s Markets. For any questions, see Eugenia Marks, or this site:

<http://environmentcouncilri.org/content/buy-nothing-day-winter-coat-exchange-nov-23>

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service at Saylesville *cont’d from p 1*

Attendees are encouraged to bring their own unscented candles and candle holders for the service. After the service, we invite everyone to gather in the kitchen for beverages and potluck refreshments. We appreciate all contributions of refreshments and ask that they be brought early so that worship may begin on time. If possible, please label ingredients for those with food sensitivities.

Christmas Holiday Gathering *cont’d from p 1*

contact John 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.

Moses Brown School – Upcoming Events November - January

All School Meetings are all school events where Providence MM members are welcome to attend and share in worship with the Moses Brown community.

November 25 Tuesday - 10:20 AM to 11:10 AM - Field House, and

December 19 Friday - 11:00 AM to 12:00 PM - Field House

Visiting Scholar - Author Eyal Press – **December 2** Tuesday - 3:15-4:15 pm

MB’s first Visiting Scholar for 2014 – 2015 will be Eyal Press, author of *Beautiful Souls*. A Brown U. graduate, he is a contributor to *The New York Review of Books*, *The New York Times Magazine*, *The Atlantic*, *The Nation*, and the *Raritan Review*. His most recent book *Beautiful Souls: the courage and conscience of ordinary people in extraordinary times* was an NYT Book Review Editor’s Choice for its examination of integrity and community. He is also the author of *Beautiful Souls: Saying No, Breaking Ranks and Heeding the Voice of Conscience in Dark Times* (2012), and *Absolute Convictions* (2006), a narrative account of the abortion conflict. This is a chance to hear him talk about the role of integrity in our communities.

Open House - **January 11, 2015** Sunday - 1:30 - 3:30 pm

Considering an independent school education for your child? Spend some time at Moses Brown School. Meet students, faculty and parents; get an up-close view of our school.

CLERK'S CORNER by Dan Lederer

In Pursuit of Equality

Quaker testimonies present Friends with a dual challenge: First we try to interpret and understand the testimonies, and then we strive to live by them. Here in the USA we can pursue this spiritual journey without fearing that it will cost us our lives, but elsewhere this would not always be the case.

Consider the testimony of equality; in some countries, advocating for it might be dangerous or even fatal. This year's recipients of the Nobel Peace Prize serve as examples. Most everyone is familiar with Malala Yousafzai's story. Now only 17 years old, she was born in 1997 in Pakistan's Swat Valley. Her family valued education highly, with her father running a chain of schools. By the time she was 11 the Taliban were gaining influence there, imposing a brand of extremism that included banning girls from attending school. In response, Malala began advocating for girls' basic right to an education, first locally and then via a BBC blog followed by a BBC documentary. Issuing death threats, the Taliban demanded that she desist, but she was undeterred. In October 2012 a Taliban would-be assassin boarded a school bus, identified Malala, and wounded her as well as two other children. Malala required emergency surgery, was transferred to a hospital in Birmingham, England, and survived. She now attends school in the relative safety of Birmingham but continues to speak out, most prominently in an address to the United Nations last July.

Less well-known is Malala's co-recipient, Kailash Satyarthi, a 60 year old Indian engineer currently living in New Delhi who has been instrumental in the fight against child labor, including child slavery. He too risked his life following the leadings of conscience, in his case during raids on factories to free bonded child workers. His goal is to see a world-wide ban on child labor.

It's interesting that the Norwegian Nobel Committee has expanded its criteria for the Peace Prize to include advocacy for education and an end to child labor, whereas in the past its focus has been on efforts to end armed conflict. There is of course a connection between the lack of opportunity and the rise of violent extremism. Our nation's efforts to establish security by military force are unlikely to be successful if we fail to address the hopelessness that makes militant extremism attractive. Bearing this in mind, what can we Quakers do to promote equality and thereby honor these most recent Nobel Peace Prize recipients?

Upcoming Events from Martha Yager (AFSC-SENE) 508-399-6699 sene@afsc.org

Wed. November 12, 5:30pm Way of Nonviolence: An Evening with Peace Educators MJ and Jerry Park. The couple directs Little Friends for Peace, a Washington DC-based nonprofit providing a variety of peace education programs. Consider a \$25 donation to support the work of the Center for Nonviolent Solutions, 320 Jefferson Hall, Clark University 950 Main St, Worcester 774-641-1566 <http://www.nonviolentsolution.org/>

January 25 Young Adult Friends Event

Monthly meetings have struggled with questions of how best to support and engage young adults, to provide structure for young families and how to keep NEYM alive and engaging for youth in the first few challenging years out of high school.

We invite you to a Consultation on the needs of young adult Friends, scheduled for January 24, 2015, in Providence, RI. We hope that you'll consider attending. A more complete article will appear next month, and Dan Lederer may be contacted for more information.

First Day School Giving Opportunities (cont. from p 1)

a Heifer cow at \$250. Our FDS students will select the animals based on their judgment and your donations. The total of the donations will determine what animals we are able to buy for Heifer International to ship to families to raise for food, fiber, or other economic benefit. Please make checks payable to Providence Friends Meeting with "Heifer" in the memo line. A special donation box is downstairs at Meeting House.

CAP: Our second project is to collect gifts for families in the East Bay through the Community Action Program (CAP). Each year the East Bay CAP asks congregations to help them fulfill the Christmas wishes of their client families. They will send us the names, ages, and sizes for children in 3 to 4 families. They may also request gift cards for groceries, gasoline, or transit. We will create a giving tree so that you may select gifts for families.

CAMP STREET THANKSGIVING: We have received a letter requesting Thanksgiving Dinner groceries from Camp Street Community Ministries to help the 175 families they serve. Cranberry sauce, canned vegetables, stuffing mix, and gravy will be greatly appreciated and can be placed in the box in lectern in Meeting House Foyer. Eugenia will transport these goods on November 23. If you want to donate for turkeys, checks can be made to Camp Street Community Ministries and sent to 194 Camp Street, Providence, RI 02906.

Thanks for joining us in sharing our bounty.

Providence Monthly Meeting - Contacts

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Email list moderator: Dan Lederer list@providencefriends.org

Website: webclerk@providencefriends.org

Moses Brown School Liaison: Willis Monroe liaison@providencefriends.org

Young Adult Friends: (To Be Named) 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



Elizabeth Bonner Zimmerman

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

Meeting for Worship each Sunday

Providence: 10:00 am Saylesville: 10:30 am
Conanicut (Jamestown) 10:30 am (Mabel's Studio)
Nov 16,30 Dec 14, 28 Jan 11, 25

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

Wednesday – 10-11:30am 2nd & 4th 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.

Happy Holidays?

Someone in our community raised a question about the name of our seasonal event – should it be called a “Holiday Gathering” or a “Christmas Gathering”? Is the phrase “Happy Holidays” a way to avoid or negate any relationship to a higher calling? Looking back at 10 years of the PFM, I found about half of each.

Many in our community have leanings toward interfaith sharing and co-operation, and while our annual event has the Nativity Story and is generally (but not totally) comprised of songs relating to Christmas, some people think of this event and the season itself as encompassing Christmas in a broader sense of the ideals that many different traditions share - brotherhood, peace, helpfulness, etc.

So, using the awesome power of The Editorship, the page 1 article uses both, calling it our “Christmas Holiday Gathering”. See you there.

Happy Holidays,

Steve

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