

The Provident FRIEND

May 2015

Providence Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

NEYM 2015 – 355th Annual Sessions

Castleton State College VT - August 1 (Sat.) through August 6 (Thurs)

Registration and information: <https://neym.org/sessions> (508) 754-6760

Returning to the beautiful campus of Castleton State College in Castleton, Vermont, the theme for this year's Sessions will be "Living Into Covenant Community," as we explore what it means to be a community of faith gathering from throughout New England. Last year's experiment with a "pay-as-led" approach to Sessions fees was a great success. Friends found it simpler, and the generosity of monthly meetings and individuals covered all the costs of the gathering for the first time in many years, in addition to allowing participation by those unable to cover the actual costs.

Rebecca Leuchak is on the planning committee, and requests that anyone going please contact her directly at rleuchak@gmail.com, to consider volunteering and ride sharing. Rebecca also suggests that anyone interested find a member of our meeting who has been to one of these and get a first hand report about what it is like.

RI Pridefest Participation June 20 – Noon to 8pm, 8:45 Parade

RI PrideFest will be held on June 20, 2015. The fair will include an outreach table of members/attenders of Providence Friends Meeting who wish to celebrate and support Pride and diversity in our State. The fair is on the South Water Street Greenway, in Providence. We are also marching, joined by Quakers from other meetings in our region, in the Illuminated Night Parade at 8:45 p.m. The parade route winds through the streets of downtown, starting at Dorrance and Weybosset, marching down Washington to Empire and ending back at Weybosset Street.

Come to be part of our group if you can, or support us by visiting our booth and cheering us on in the parade! Anyone and everyone is welcome. AND it's all free to the public! Contact Rebecca Leuchak (rleuchak@gmail.com) or Morgan Lord (mhlord2004@gmail.com) for more information and to participate along with Quakers in support of Pride!

Movie Night with Presentation and Talk – July 9 (Thursday!)

Communications Committee will be presenting the next Meeting Movie Night at 7:00 PM on a Thursday. *The Sacred Place Where Life Begins - Gwich'in Women Speak* is a 20 minute documentary film about Alaskan natives, and will be presented at the Providence Meeting House on July 9 by filmmaker Miho Aida. Miho is bicycling from Washington DC to Maine, showing the film and doing talks with a petition to preserve the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and keep it free of oil drilling. From San Francisco (originally from Tokyo, Japan), she did a similar west coast trip last year.

It starts at 7pm with an introduction, and proceeds with the film, discussion with Q & A, time at which we are encouraged to take action by signing petitions and writing letters, and a chance to mingle, etc.

Visit www.mihoaida.com/gwichin for more information about the film. As always, coffee and refreshments will be provided.

(Published June 12)

Calendar (also see p 4 Events)

June 14 Sun: 12:00 Meeting For Business, SAYLESVILLE Meeting House. (p3)

June 18 Thurs: 7pm RIIP&L panel Discussion, Wakefield RI (p6)

June 20 Sat: 10am-12pm Saylesville Bookswap

June 20 Sat: noon-8pm, 8:45 RI Pridefest, Parade at 8:45, South Water Street, Providence (p1)

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

June 30 Tues: 7pm AFSC film showing of "Voices Across the Divide", Providence Meeting House (p7)

July 5-11 Thurs: FGC Gathering, Western Carolina University, Cullowhee, NC. <http://www.fgcquaker.org/>

July 9 Thurs: 7pm Movie Night, Providence Meeting House (p1)

July 18 Sat: 10am-12pm Saylesville Bookswap

July 26 Sun: 3-6pm Sacred Harp Sing at Providence Meeting House

July 29 Wed: 7pm AFSC Gaza talk, Bell Street Chapel, (p7)

Aug 1-6 Sat-Thurs: NEYM Annual Sessions (p1)

**Providence Monthly Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business
Minutes – 10th Fifth Month, 2015**

1. We gathered at 12:00 noon at the Saylesville meetinghouse, with sixteen present. In the opening worship the clerk read the following queries from Philadelphia Yearly Meeting's *Faith and Practice*:

Are our meetings for worship held in stilled, expectant waiting upon God?

As we worship is there a living silence in which we are drawn together by the power of God in our midst?

2. Announcements: The next Meeting Movie Night will be at 7:00 pm on Wednesday, May 13. The films to be shown are "Trevor", a short drama about a 13 year old boy's struggles with sexual identity, and "As We Forgive", a powerful 53 minute documentary about forgiveness and reconciliation in Rwanda.

3. Correspondence: We have received notice from New England Yearly Meeting that NEYM Sessions will take place August 1 – 6 at Castleton State College in Castleton, VT, with the theme being "Living into Covenant Community." It is open to all and more information can be found at <http://www.neym.org/sessions>.

4. Report from Saylesville Working Group: For Ministry and Counsel, Abigail Mansfield-Marcaccio presented a report from the Saylesville Working Group:

There is a general sense among Friends in Saylesville and Providence that Saylesville Preparative Meeting is in a difficult situation. A working group comprised of 3 members of Ministry and Counsel in Providence and 3 Friends from Saylesville has formed. Our first meeting was April 29, 2015. Those present were: Abigail Mansfield Marcaccio (convener), Rosanne Cedrone, Dieter Gomes, Bruce Downing, Ariana Steele, Joanne Griffin, and Betsy Zimmerman. The working group set up plans for Friends in Saylesville to assume greater responsibility for several tasks which strongly impact the life of the meeting. These include:

1. assigning a specific person each week to open the meeting house 10 minutes prior to the start of worship on First Days;
2. holding business meetings;
3. notifying Saylesville Friends of the day and time of Saylesville's business meetings;
4. taking minutes at business meetings and sending them to Ministry and Counsel;
5. arranging for a date to clean the meeting house;
6. arranging for reduction of the number of books in the meeting house and for a clean and mold-free storage system of books to remain in the meeting house for the book swap;
7. taking steps to nurture and support a strong core of religious practice grounded in the traditions of Friends unprogrammed worship.

Saylesville Friends expressed a wish to continue as a preparative meeting. The group agreed to work on the aforementioned 7 goals beginning immediately. The group further agreed that it will meet again in October to assess progress toward these goals, and to discuss further action should barriers to realizing these goals arise.

5. Report from Saylesville: Joanne Griffin reported that due to some medical issues, they were unable to hold meeting for business this morning before worship, but have scheduled a meeting for next week. They expect to donate a number of books to the Westport Meeting's annual book sale in 7th month.

6. State of the Society Report: For Ministry and Counsel, Ariana Steele presented a revised draft of the State of Society Report. (See 4th mo. minute #5.) We approve this report, with thanks to all who contributed to the revision process.

7. Disposition of donations withheld from FUM: In accordance with our current practice, we considered the disposition of money that individual donors to Providence Meeting have requested not be passed to Friends United Meeting through New England Yearly Meeting. (See minute, 10th mo. 2010.) The amount in question this fiscal year, as we have calculated it, is \$43.81. As in past years, Ministry and Counsel recommends that this money be given to the African Great Lakes Initiative. We approve.

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

The Treasurer raised a question about how we calculate the fraction that we withhold. The clerk reminded us that this meeting has not chosen to withhold the entire portion of the NEYM donation that would go to Friends United Meeting. We note that Ministry and Counsel intends to reevaluate the procedure and the destination for the coming year.

8. Request for junior membership: For Ministry and Counsel, Ariana Steele presented a request from Mason Wiesner that he be enrolled as a Junior Member of Providence Meeting. He has been attending regularly for five years with his grandmother, Carol Smith. His parents have written a letter supporting his request. We approve.

9. Report from Peace and Social Concerns: Mark Conley reported on the committee’s discernment of the distribution of the \$5,500 budgeted for meeting contributions for peace and service organizations, as follows:

African Great Lakes Initiative	\$ 100	Fund for Community Progress	\$ 100
AFSC New England Regional Office	\$ 500	(includes George Wiley Center)	
AFSC (National)	\$ 500	Inspiring Minds	\$ 100
AFSC South East New England program	\$2000	(formerly Volunteers in Community Schools)	
Friends Committee on National Legislation	\$ 500	Institute for the Study and Practice of Nonviolence	\$ 200
Quaker House, Fayetteville, NC	\$ 125	RI Coalition for the Homeless	\$ 175
National Religious Campaign Against Torture	\$ 100	Children’s Friend	\$ 175
Amos House	\$ 100	Islamic School of RI	\$ 175
Camp Street Ministries	\$ 400	Down Syndrome Society of RI (documentary film)	\$ 175
Southside Community Land Trust	\$ 100		

We accept this report and thank the committee for its careful discernment.

10. Audit: Bruce Carlsten presented a written report on the audit that he and Matt Hackman have conducted of the Treasurer’s books for the past five fiscal years.

On February 22, 2015, the audit committee consisting of Matthew Hackman and Bruce Carlsten completed an audit of the financial records of the Providence Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends for the 5 fiscal years 2009-2010, 2010-2011, 2011-2012, 2012-2013, and 2013-2014.

In preparation for the review, Treasurer Peter Swaszek identified a difference of \$789.03 between the closing balance (of fiscal 2013-14) reported in the May 2014 Treasurer’s Report and the corresponding statements from the financial institutions (NEYM Pooled Funds, Citizens Bank, and Ameritrade). Upon further scrutiny, the Treasurer identified several old uncashed checks (which have since been rewritten), a number of missed bills (mostly due to missing statements from bills processed by auto-payment), and several reporting/recording errors. After adjusting for these discoveries, the May 2014 Treasurer’s Report and the financial statements were essentially found to balance.

Going forward, a process for catching and rectifying such reporting errors early has been identified and is being implemented.

The committee expresses its sincere gratitude to Peter Swaszek for the services that he continues to competently and graciously perform for Providence Friends Meeting.

We accept this report with appreciation for the work of the auditors and the Treasurer.

11. We closed at 1:10 pm with a period of grateful worship, intending to meet next on the 14th of 6th mo. at the Saylesville meetinghouse.

Daniel Lederer, Clerk Elizabeth Cazden, Recording Clerk

[ed. Note: RE # 6. A copy of the State of the Society Report is attached to the record copy of the minutes, and was emailed May 12, 8:37AM.]

Around the Meeting

Forks and Supplies –
Bruce Carlsten asks that we bring and donate to our kitchen any unneeded (metal) forks, because we don't have enough when we have a large potluck. Also, if you notice any supply that needs replacing (paper

towels, soap or dish soap, etc), please let Bruce know rather than doing it yourself (unless necessary). This enables Bruce to keep track of what we need, use, and have, and also avoids broken fixtures.

Headstone Rubbing –
The downstairs bulletin board has the rubbing of the newly installed headstone in the Saylesville Burial Ground.
Meeting with Sen. Jack Reed – On June 19, guided by FCNL, a group

of us are going to meet with RI U.S. Senator Jack Reed (ranking member of the Armed Services Committee) to talk in support of negotiations with Iran. After it, please look for a request to write letters, etc. If interested, please contact Dede Carlsten.

Junior Members Policy

Some questions have been raised about junior membership at Meeting. We do not automatically record children as junior members when they are born to Meeting members or when one or both parents are approved for membership. Rather, we ask the parents to request junior membership for their child or children. This is because we want to be sure that both parents are in agreement with the request.

Library Committee Report

The Providence Meeting copy has a number of copies of New England Yearly Meeting's most recent edition of *Faith and Practice* (1985) as well as a draft copy of the revision in progress on which Friends are encouraged to comment. We also have copies of the *Faith and Practice* or *Discipline* of a few other yearly meetings. All of these offer helpful information and spiritual guidance. To make it easier for Friends to find them, we have given the various versions of *Faith and Practice* a separate section near the door, just below the shelf of children's books.

The Bibles are now all together at the far end of the room, after the main section of books which are alphabetized by author's last name.

We eliminated the "new books" section on the far shelf and instead distributed some new books on the top shelf where they will be more noticeable.

Friends are reminded that the library books have borrowing cards in pockets at the back of the books. The borrower should write his/her name and telephone number and the date of borrowing on the card and leave it in the small basket on the top shelf. Books being returned may be left in the larger basket to be dealt with by the library committee.

Worship At Saylesville Meeting

Members and attenders who typically attend meeting for worship in Providence are welcome to visit meeting for worship in Saylesville. Your presence would help Saylesville Meeting nurture a stronger core of religious practice grounded in the traditions of Friends' unprogrammed silent worship. The Meeting House is located at 374 Great Road in Lincoln, RI, and Meeting for Worship is at 10:30 AM on First Days.

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

[2015 unless noted, month in brackets indicates a recent issue that has an article about this event]

July 5 - 9 - Writing Your Spiritual Autobiography – Pendle Hill [Feb/Mar p7]

July 26-30 - Spiritual Discernment – Whether a burning issue or to follow the Spirit day by day... Pendle Hill [Feb/Mar p7]

Aug 1-6 - NEYM Sessions, at Castleton State College in Castleton, VT [May p2 Minute #3]

August 7-9 and August 9-13 - Arts and Spirituality Workshops - Creative paper arts, poetry. Pendle Hill [Feb/Mar p7]

Pastoral Care Committee's Role In the Life of the Meeting *from Pastoral Care Committee*

Pastoral Care Committee would like the Meeting to understand more clearly its role in the life of the Meeting. There has been some slight confusion in the recent past that the role of Pastoral Care is to help Friends with personal, mental health or otherwise, issues. Pastoral Care Committee is defined as:

Members of Ministry and Counsel should come to know all members and attenders, to share their joys and sorrows, and to find ways to encourage and help them. Love is nurtured by visits and correspondence. From time to time Ministry and Counsel may call a special meeting or appoint a special committee to help Friends who are seeking guidance or in other ways wish support from the meeting. Ordinarily such committees, unlike clearness committees, do not report back to the monthly meeting. Faith and Practice of New England Yearly Meeting of Friends, p. 243.

Pastoral Care Committee would welcome information from Friends regarding those who are in need of contact from us because of joys, sorrows, illness, disability or otherwise are in need of assistance by way of organizing "food trains," rides, etc., or who would just welcome flowers or cards from Meeting. Friends needing assistance with matters which may be on a more personal or health-related basis should first contact their physicians for assistance, as representatives on Pastoral Care are not qualified to help in those matters.

Funeral and Burial Grounds Committee Request For Help

From Matt Hackman, Clerk

Our committee is currently short-handed, and need help with various activities:

- The cataloging of the graves in all three of our burial grounds is a long-term, ongoing project first started with the survey of the Saylesville Meeting property and burial grounds over 10 years ago. We are surveying the Friends Section of the Providence North Burial Grounds this year, and it may be several years until we can get Cumberland Burial Grounds surveyed. The survey is only a start, and is the tool needed to begin recording all the Friends interred in the Burial Grounds. We are glad for any help from anyone, whether or not a member of the committee.
- We always need people willing to assist with any memorial service that arises. This includes attending the service and helping set up and take down chairs, the purchase and arranging of modest and appropriate flowers for the meetinghouse, and making coffee and hot water for tea.
- We are always working on plantings at Saylesville, and try to coordinate these efforts with First Day School.
- We have a number of infrastructure repair projects ongoing, currently focusing on repairing and re-setting gravestones.

Anyone interested in helping with any of these activities, please contact Matt Hackman, matthewehackman@verizon.net.

Friends Camp (NEYM) Season

Friends Camp is a caring and accepting camp community with Quaker values, creative activities, and lot's of zany fun for youth ages seven to seventeen. You can visit the camps new web site at www.friendscamp.org. Our Yearly Meeting camp in South China, Maine will offer four traditional youth camps;

Jones Session – June 21 to July 4 for elementary school age

Dyer Session – July 5 to 18 for middle school age

Fox Session – July 19 – August 1 (Full)

Fell Session – August 2 to 15 for high school age youth (offers an overnight camping and hiking program for teens)

To sign up for Friends Camp, visit the web page (above). More information is at 207-873-3499, 207-445-2361, or director@friendscamp.org.

Nat Shed, Director

CLERK'S CORNER by Dan Lederer

Quaker Testimonies

The Quaker testimonies of simplicity, peace, integrity, community, equality, and stewardship (acronym SPICES) present us with a dual challenge, first to interpret them and then to incorporate them into our lives. Each testimony warrants careful consideration, which is what Philip Gulley has done in his book entitled *Living the Quaker Way: Discover the Hidden Happiness in the Simple Life*. I found his ruminations to be quite edifying as he explores his own struggles trying to live out the testimonies while following “a religion that prizes inward dedication over outward declaration.”

Starting with simplicity, he asserts that “the centered life begins with our commitment to strip away the unessential”, which of course is easier said than done, and even he admits that “the urge to acquire has never left me.” How to get there? “What is needed is a new measure of success” other than the accumulation of wealth, and “learning to want less”.

In regard to peace, Gulley points out that “hostility has become a national pastime” and asks, “Do any of us consider our role in an economy structured for perpetual war?” He observes that our culture doesn’t allow us the inward peace needed to bring us to outward peace. Based on his conviction that “just as hatred and violence are learned they can be unlearned”, and his experience of our “shared humanity” and “shared Divine Presence”, he advocates finding ways to heal “the hateful thought, the intolerant rhetoric, the laws that demean.”

Gulley laments that “the trust and goodwill that once lubricated our social discourse seems absent.” He sees Quaker integrity as being “the watchful attention to one’s statements”, and suggests that living a life of integrity requires that one’s values and lifestyle coincide. On the importance of community (which he lumps together with stewardship): “...any spiritual community should make the formation of healthy relationships a top priority” because “when community and the lessons we learn in it are a priority, all of life is transformed.” And what about equality? “To be a Quaker is to commit oneself to thorough and lasting equality....I want no part of any god or religion that exalts some and vilifies others....to live the Quaker way is to see God not just in some but in all.”

To him, the Quaker testimonies are valuable because “I believe the testimonies...when properly lived out, have the potential to create heaven on earth.” Discovering what the Quaker testimonies mean to us is our task, our spiritual journey. I recommend Philip Gulley’s book because it can be a valuable guide along the way.

Powell House Introductory Offer To New Members

Powell House, the Quaker retreat center in Chatham, New York, is offering free attendance for an adult conference to new members of meetings during their first year of membership.

If a new member of your meeting would like to attend a Powell House conference, they will need to call or e-mail to register (can’t register online for a free conference) and have their clerk confirm via e-mail that they are new members of the meeting.

powellhouse.org

518-794-8811

info@powellhouse.org

RI Interfaith Power & Light Wind and Solar Energy Panel Discussion

Thursday, June 18, 7pm – Peace Dale Congregational Church

Learn what we can do to encourage clean energy in our homes and communities. Moderated by RIPL secretary Christine Muller, the panel includes people from the RI Office of Energy Resources, the Narragansett Bay Commission, and the URI Landscape Architecture Dept. The church address is 261 Columbia St., Wakefield, RI. More information at Kathy@ri-ipl.org or (401) 324-9142.

AFSC-SENE: Focus On Three Major Summer Projects – from Martha Yager

The first of our summer projects is the ongoing work on the Community Safety Act for the city of Providence. The Community Safety Act takes its name from the urgent need to make our communities safer – for our children, our extended families, and our neighbors. The ordinance includes guidelines for police community interactions that are basic first steps to reducing anger at police misconduct, increasing trust and communication, and most importantly – shifting the focus from criminalizing people of color, to addressing the root causes that perpetuate violence in our communities. A Providence coalition (the STEP UP Network) is in the process of meeting with law enforcement. Sometime in the next few weeks there will be a public hearing on the ordinance. And we continue to meet with City Councilors to build support for the ordinance. We will have a presence at Pride events as well.

The second is marking the anniversary of the devastation of Gaza last summer and the urgent need for rebuilding and care for those traumatized by the war, especially children. We are making a display of black pinwheels with the names of the 521 children from Gaza and the one child from Israel who died. It is a child version of the Eyes Wide Open boots exhibit. Watch for a request to help label the pinwheels. Alice Rothschild is a physician in the Boston area, and on June 30th we will show her outstanding film "Voices Across the Divide". Alice's parents were Holocaust survivors and she grew up with that narrative. Slowly she became aware of another narrative, the stories of the Palestinians displaced in the creation of Israel. Her film is of her journey and her effort to give voice to the narrative she didn't hear growing up. The film will be at the Providence Meeting House Tuesday June 30, at 7pm. On July 29, Dr. Rothschild, will speak about her recent trip to Gaza at at the Bell Street Chapel, where the Gaza Pinwheel project will be on display.

The third project is "All of Us or None", an interactive display of 37 posters answering the question "Well, if war is not the answer what is?" We are still arranging for display locations and programming to accompany them. They will be traveling throughout the region in July. Watch for more information!

Providence Monthly Meeting - Contacts

Providence Meeting (401) 331-4218 <http://providencelfriends.org>
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Presiding Clerk: Dan Lederer clerk@providencelfriends.org

Assistant Presiding Clerk: Abigail Mansfield Marcaccio

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Newsletter: Steve Schwartz providentfriend@providencelfriends.org

Email list moderator: Dan Lederer list@providencelfriends.org

Website: webclerk@providencelfriends.org

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

Young Adult Friends: (To Be Named) yaf@providencelfriends.org

To schedule the Meetinghouse: Bruce Shaw scheduling@providencelfriends.org

AFSC SENE: Martha Yager (508) 399-6699 or myager@afsc.org or

www.afsc.org/sene



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
Conanicut (Middletown) 10:30 am (NBS/Mabel's Studio)
April 5, 19

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.

Call (508) 399-6699

Family Service May 3

Providence Meeting's first Family Worship was held as an experiment to increase engagement with young children. All there seemed to enjoy it – and thanks to Betsy Z. for this view of it.



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99 Morris Avenue
Providence, RI 02906