

# The Provident FRIEND

*News from the Providence Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends*

November 16, 2017

## Report from FCNL Public Policy Institute/Annual Meeting

*Betsy Cazden and Nancy Houston*

Betsy Cazden and Nancy Houston joined more than 400 others at the Annual Meeting of the Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL), held in Washington, DC, November 2-5, 2017. Betsy is one of six representatives from New England Yearly Meeting to FCNL's General Committee or governing body. Nancy is a member of the Providence based FCNL advocacy team, and spent the afternoon of Nov. 1<sup>st</sup> at an Advocacy Team Summit where she learned about motivational interviewing. Advocacy Team members viewed video highlights online later in the week.

The first two days of the meeting were lobbying training and practice, advocating for holding down increases in Pentagon spending while maintaining adequate funding for diplomacy, social programs, and everything else. There were informative sessions on the substantive issue as we learned the Congressional jargon, such as "sequester," "parity," and "OCO" ("Oh-Coe"), the "Overseas Contingency Operations Fund" that is an outside-the-budget slush fund for the Pentagon. (See resources [here](#).) There were also training sessions on how to lobby, which repeated information from the training for FCNL's Advocacy Teams. There were rousing prophetic speeches by staff member Amelia Kegan and by Sister Simone Campbell (of "Nuns on the Bus" fame). Video of some of these presentations are available on [the FCNL website](#).

We had surprisingly long lobby visits with Sen. Jack Reed and Rep. David Cicilline, with their senior staff, and with staff members for Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse and Rep. Jim Langevin. They encouraged us to keep doing what we're doing, and assured us that even when they agree, it is useful to make our voices heard. All of our members seemed committed to "parity," that is, if the Pentagon budget is increased (likely), the non-defense budget should go up by the same amount. That is a sharp contrast to the Administration's budget proposal. If you'd like to contact your representative and our Senators on this issue, we'd be glad to give you more details about each of their positions and approaches.

In all, FCNL attenders had more than 200 lobby visits, more than 55 of them including the member of Congress. It was heartening to hear back how many had found common ground even with offices we often disagree with. One state delegation opened their meeting by saying, "It's our practice to begin meetings with a few minutes of silent prayer. Would you join us in that?" and reported that it changed the tone. Another, meeting with a devout (right-wing) Christian, began by invoking the Prince of Peace. FCNL has a strong "brand" on Capitol Hill, with many offices grateful for how we raise issues and come well-prepared, even when they don't vote the way we'd prefer.

*(Continued on p. 2)*

## CALENDAR

### Friday, November 17

**1:30 pm**, Fellowship with Muslim neighbors  
Masjid Al Kareem  
39 Haskins Ave., Providence  
Come if you can to share cookies, coffee and tea!

### Saturday, November 18

**10 am-12:15**, Saylesville Meetinghouse Bookswap

### 2-5 pm

Project Peacework  
Interfaith Women's Craft Project:  
Blankets for Refugees  
Providence Meetinghouse  
(Bring a pork-free bite to share and a crochet hook if you have one.  
Yarn is provided, and children are welcome)

### 4 pm

Memorial Service for Edward Baker (Westerly Meeting)  
Westerly Chorus Hall, 119 High St.,  
Westerly, RI 02891  
Reception to follow

### Sunday, November 19

**3-6 pm**, Shape Note Singing  
Providence Meetinghouse  
Contact Bob Elliott for details

### Sunday, December 3

**11 am**, PMM Monthly  
Potluck, Providence Meetinghouse

### Sunday, December 10

**12 pm**, PMM Business Meeting,  
Providence Meetinghouse

### Saturday, December 16

**5 pm**, Christmas Gathering,  
Providence Meetinghouse

### Sunday, December 24

**4:30 pm**, Christmas Eve Candlelight  
Worship Service,  
Saylesville Meetinghouse

## Report from FCNL Public Policy Institute and Annual Meeting (Continued)

The last two days of the meeting were the General Committee business meetings. Much of the detailed business is done by standing committees and an Executive Committee; the budget, nominations, and broad policy direction came to the floor for discernment. We heard (and celebrated with cake) that the FCNL Capital Campaign, which a number of Providence Friends contributed to, brought in a total of \$17.5 million, well above its goal of \$15 million. The [Quaker Welcome Center](#), in a row house adjacent to the office, is completing a fully “green” renovation, using campaign funds, and is now open. Every Wednesday (and other times by appointment), they will have lobby training for Friends and others from 9 to 11 am, and “Silent Reflection” (meeting for worship to us) from 5:15 to 6:00 pm.

To find out more about FCNL’s work, talk with either of us or go to [www.fcnl.org](http://www.fcnl.org). Consider joining the Providence Advocacy Team, which will continue building ongoing relationships with all of Rhode Island’s representatives and Senators. In early 2018, our meeting will have an opportunity to participate in shaping FCNL’s legislative priorities for the 2019-2020 session of Congress, which will be approved by the General Committee in November 2018.



### The Giving Season I: PMM Annual Funding Appeal

*by Dan Lederer on behalf of Finance Committee*

This is Finance Committee’s annual request for financial support. While we greatly appreciate the contributions many of you have made to the Providence meetinghouse expansion fund, and we acknowledge the many non-monetary ways that Friends contribute to Meeting, we still need money to pay for our Meeting activities and financial obligations. Our budget this fiscal year, which began June 1, totals \$101,683, out of which \$55,445, or 55%, is needed from contributions. During our last fiscal year we received donations from 59 contributing units (families or individuals). If the same number of persons and families contribute this year, that means that their donations will need to average around \$940 for us to avoid a deficit at the end of the fiscal year. Clearly \$940 is more than some can afford, so the hope is that those of you who are able to do so will help make up the difference.

As we have done in the past, we invite you to let the treasurer know if you feel that, as a matter of conscience related to Friends United Meeting’s hiring policies, the Meeting should withhold that part of your contribution (which is less than 1%) that would have gone to FUM via Meeting’s contribution to New England Yearly Meeting. This can be done simply by writing on your check “Not to FUM”. Toward the end of the fiscal year we will decide at Meeting for Business how best to use the total amount withheld. Contributions can be placed in the contribution box in the meetinghouse foyer or mailed to the Meeting treasurer, **Peter Swaszek, 57 Brayton Street, East Greenwich, RI 02818**. Make your check payable to **Providence Friends Meeting**. If you do banking by mail, you can set the Meeting up as a payee, using your own name as the account number.

**Providence Monthly Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business  
12th of 11th Month - MINUTES**

1. We gathered at the Providence meetinghouse at 12:10 pm with 24 present. Following a period of silent worship, the clerk read the following queries on Stewardship of Resources from Philadelphia Yearly Meeting *Faith & Practice*:

Does our meeting serve social and economic justice in its uses of property and money?

How does our meeting engage its members in the support of the meeting's work, its ministry, and the upkeep of its property?

How does our meeting engage its members in the support of the quarterly and yearly meetings and other Quaker organizations?

To what extent does our meeting rely on current members for financial support, and what role does endowment income serve? Does the meeting consider carefully the appropriate role of invested funds?

**2. Announcements.**

A memorial service for Edward Baker of Westerly Meeting will be held at 4:00 PM on the 18<sup>th</sup> day of 11<sup>th</sup> month at the Chorus Hall, 119 High Street, Westerly. Help with child care has been requested, and friends are encouraged to carpool.

Framingham and Beacon Hill meetings will be hosting Moses Murenga Simiyu, a visiting Quaker minister from the Mumias Friends Church Kenya, on the 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> days of this month. All are invited.

**3. Property Committee.**

Nina Berry gave a report on their activities over the past couple of years. In the Providence meetinghouse, Bob Elliott crafted new doors in the meeting room and downstairs to retain the look of the previous doors while adding panic hardware. The craftsmanship of these doors has drawn praise from outside contractors. Windows were added to the front entry doors along with panic hardware. They also added a one-way window into the childcare room, motion-sensor controlled lights at the entryways, air conditioning units in the meeting room, and replaced a dishwasher.

The committee engaged a consultant to prepare a 30-year maintenance and financial reserve plan for both meetinghouses, which the committee has used to guide its priorities for repairs. The stoop outside the meeting room was replaced; the trim has been painted and windows reglazed and some replaced, and a mason repointed the bricks where necessary and replaced missing bullnose bricks. An attic hatch has been sealed off, and the chimney flashings redone, to prevent water damage. The upcoming projects include installing lockable cabinets above the coatrack on the lower level, repairing the third-floor ceiling, removing the yew shrub that has grown too large a root system, and winterization. Attention will also be given to the off-street parking area in the future.

At Saylesville, the committee has been working with local Friends to get bids for replacing the damaged fence with a split-rail fence. They want to paint the remaining faces of the building, but carpentry and window repair need to be done first. The heating system may need to be replaced but seems to be working at present; the hot water heater will be replaced with an on-demand system. Clearing the miscellany out of the meetinghouse both inside and outside is also on the

agenda.

We thank the committee for this report, and especially for the reserve study that is guiding its work.

#### **4. Ministry and Counsel.**

Ariana Steele reported that she and Rebecca Leuchak, as incoming clerks, will be attending a weekend workshop on clerking at Pendle Hill, with support from the Ruth Arnold Kellam Fund.

#### **5. Conanicut Meeting (Indulged).**

Marcie Lindsay joined us for worship and meeting for business. The meeting had to make a decision on disposition of the \$1,000 donation it received from a nonmember, and decided to allocate it \$500 to the Ramallah Friends School Scholarship Fund and \$500 to the monthly meeting's Peace and Social Action Fund for support of refugee families. We concur in this decision. Harry Wright, who has been the liaison between the meeting and the Jamestown Historical Society for many years, has stepped down, and Marcie will be filling that role. There are about thirty people on the meeting's mailing list, with more attenders during the summer. There will be worship weekly through the winter at the Norman Bird Sanctuary; all are welcome.

#### **6. Building Expansion.**

The Building Expansion committee presented an interim report on the project. The physical plan has been reconfigured to put the lift in the new section, and include a high efficiency boiler replacing the current boiler.

The committee has secured a bid from the civil engineering firm that has done much of the recent work at Moses Brown School. Unfortunately, the bid came in this past Friday in the order of \$600,000, significantly higher than we had anticipated. This includes engineering as well as construction. Some of the expense comes from the widely expressed desire to have the exterior appearance consistent with the earlier portion of the building. The committee has been unable to find other companies interested in bidding on the project, without first spending additional significant funds on a full engineering package. Moses Brown has giving this contractor a very high recommendation for the quality and integrity of their work, which is consistent with the committee's experience so far. Some concerns were expressed about moving forward with only a single bid, although we are aware that low bids sometimes reflect lower quality.

The committee had intended to bring a report to this Business Meeting with a request to go forward. However, this unexpectedly high bid has required the committee to do further discernment before bringing a final recommendation.

We have had an opportunity to ask questions and offer suggestions to the committee in its deliberations, in consultation with the Finance Committee and the ad hoc fundraising committee, and we look forward to their further report as soon as they are ready.

7. We closed with a period of gratitude without words, intending to meet next the 10th of 12<sup>th</sup> month, God willing.

Mike Hirtle, clerk

Elizabeth Cazden, recording clerk

### Updates from Conanicut Friends Meeting (Indulged)

Conanicut Friends were pleased to have another wonderful warm season in the old but recently refurbished 1787 Meetinghouse on the corner of Weeden Lane and North Rd. in Jamestown. With the grant and donation funds obtained by the deed owner Jamestown Historical Society (JHS) a new cedar shingled roof and south side were completed without interrupting weekly worship.



At the end of June, students are given an historical tour of the island, and JHS and former teacher Jane Bentley joined with CFM's Tony Stapelton to explain the history of the building and Quakerism. We also were pleased by the interest of two photographers this summer. Jean Schnell from Framingham is recording Quaker Meetinghouses of New England and included our old Meetinghouse in August. Another photographer who utilizes panoramic imagery is collecting images for his Sacred Spaces of New England project and hopes to visit next summer.

Beginning November 19, CFM will resume winter worship at the Studio Space in the Norman Bird Sanctuary, 583 Third Beach Rd until. We will gather there each Sunday until April 22, except for January 14. This will be our last year contracted to use this space, as we have for over a decade. We will look for new space in Jamestown for 2018. This Indulged Meeting extends its thanks to the support from Providence Friends Meeting and welcomes visitors at all times of the year. We can recommend a fall visit, as CIDER Donuts are available just down the lane!

### John Stively Sends Greetings from Refugee Camp in Jordan

John Stively, a member of the PMM community, has been led to travel to Jordan to help lend medical aid to the thousands of Syrian refugees in camps there. He arrived in early November, having traveled there with the Syrian American Medical Society (SAMS). He sends the following greeting: "Please send Light to the people of this region and particularly to those whose decisions so affect their lives, and send Love to all concerned. I feel safe, am certainly well fed, and will be going to Za'atari Camp later today for the first time. I hope to carry a little Love and Light myself and to be of service there. I will most certainly be learning a lot and will try to bring some of that home to Providence Meeting." If you'd like to send him a message, please contact John by email: [johnstively@gmail.com](mailto:johnstively@gmail.com)

### Remembering Edward Baker

*submitted by Sara Hubner, NEYM*

Edward Baker (Westerly Meeting) died on Sunday, October 29, after a valiant 5-year battle with cancer. October was his favorite month, and he was where he wanted to be, at home in the loving arms of his family. Edward's life will be celebrated in a memorial service, in the manner of Friends, on Saturday, November 18 at 4 pm at the Westerly Chorus Hall, 119 High St, Westerly, RI 02891 with reception to follow. In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation in Edward's name to the Westerly Friends Memorial Fund, 57 Elm St, Westerly, RI 02891 or the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, c/o Dr. Jochen Lorch (Thyroid Center / Jochen Lorch in the memo line), 450 Brookline Ave., Dana 2136, Boston MA 02115. His obituary can be found at <http://www.buckler-johnston.com/tributes/Edward-Baker>

## Quaker Writings: "An Uncalculated Risk"

*This excerpt from a pamphlet published by the AFSC in 1955 was read during a recent Meeting for Worship, and a Friend requested that it also appear here in the newsletter. If you have encountered a powerful piece of text that Friends might enjoy reading, consider sharing a short excerpt with the editor.*

We know of but one way to meet the forces of disintegration that threaten us. The first step is to release into society integrated men and women, whose lives are at one with God, with themselves and with their fellow men. But even this is not enough. If there is to be a religious solution to the social problem there must also be renewed in a disintegrating society the sense of community, of mutuality, of responsible brotherhood for all men everywhere. Such community is built on trust and confidence, which some will say is not possible now because the communist cannot be trusted. The politics of eternity [do] not require that we trust him. They require us to love him and to trust God. Our affirmation in this day is that of John Woolman in his: "I have no cause to promote but the cause of pure universal love." We call for no calculated risk on behalf of national interest or preservation; rather for an uncalculated risk in living by the claims of the Kingdom, on behalf of the whole family of man conceived as a divine-human society.

The politics of eternity works not by might but by spirit; a Spirit whose redemptive power is released among men through suffering endured on behalf of the evildoer, and in obedience to the divine command to love all men. Such love is worlds apart from the expedient of loving those who love us, of doing good to those who have done good to us. It is the essence of such love that it does not require an advance guarantee that it will succeed, will prove easy or cheap, or that it will be met with swift answering love. Whether practiced by men or nations, it will may encounter opposition, hate, humiliation, utter defeat. In the familiar words of the epistle, such love suffers long, is always kind, never fails. It is a principle deeply grounded in the years of Quaker sufferings, imprisonments and death. From the dungeons of Lancaster Castle, Friends spoke this Truth to Power: "But if... not..then shall wee lye downe in the peace of our God and patiently Suffer under you." This is the Spirit that overcomes the world.

(American Friends Service Committee, "Speak Truth to Power," 1955, pp. 68-9; as quoted in *NEYM Faith and Practice*, 1984, pp. 195-6.

## The Giving Season II: Reaching Beyond the Meeting

As 2017 winds down, some Friends may be considering ideas for end-of-year donations and gifts in the wider community. This month and next, the newsletter will offer some ideas for causes that Friends might like to support during the holidays. If you have suggestions to add to this list, please [email the editor](#) and they'll appear in December's edition.

Camp Street Community Ministries shelter and pantry (Donations of food pantry items, especially stuffing, gravy, non-perishable sides for holiday meals, are especially welcome)

[Rhode Island Community Food Bank](#)

[Winter Coat Donations for Buy Nothing Day](#) (see the article below)

[Dorcas International Institute of RI](#) - broad-based support for Rhode Island's diverse immigrant communities

[AHOPE \(Americans Helping Others ProspEr\)](#) - Local interfaith support for refugees and needy families in RI

[George Wiley Center](#) - Anti-poverty activism

[SAMS \(Syrian American Medical Society\)](#) - Support for refugees in Syria and elsewhere

**Celebrate Buy Nothing Day: Take Part in RI Coat Exchange**

On the day after Thanksgiving, from 9 am to 1 pm on the State House lawn and at other locations throughout the state, Rhode Islanders will once again mark "Buy Nothing Day" with a winter coat donation event offering free coats, hats, gloves, scarves, sweaters, and sweatshirts to all who need one, with no questions asked. Every year the event depends on donations from the Rhode Island community. If you would like to donate warm winter clothes in any size (but no other items, please), bring them to one of the following collection sites before 11/22. Please share the word.

- Hot Club Providence, 25 Bridge St. (Contact Sarah Bates, 401-861-9007)
- Bell St. Chapel, 5 Bell St.(Contact Tina Dolen)
- The Providence Center, 530 North Main St., 4th floor office (Contact Priscilla Villa, 401-528-0160)
- Providence Libraries, all locations (Contact Michelle Novello, 401-369-0500)
- Any YMCA in the Greater Providence area (Contact Neta Taylor, 401-295-6501)

**Providence Monthly Meeting Contact List**

- Presiding Clerk: **Mike Hirtle** clerk@providencefriends.org
- Assistant Presiding Clerk: **Rebecca Leuchak** assistclerk@providencefriends.org
- Recording Clerk: **Betsy Cazden** recordingclerk@providencefriends.org
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- Property: **Bob Elliott and Nina Berry** property@providencefriends.org
- Funeral & Burial: **Matt Hackman** funeralandburial@providencefriends.org
- Newsletter: **Jen McFadden** providentfriend@providencefriends.org
- Email list moderator: **Dan Lederer** list@providencefriends.org
- Website: **webclerk@providencefriends.org**
- Moses Brown School Liaison: **Betsy Zimmerman** liaison@providencefriends.org
- Young Adult Friends: (To Be Named) **yaf@providencefriends.org**
- To schedule the Meetinghouse: **Bruce Shaw** scheduling@providencefriends.org



**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: 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 are welcome):**

**Monday** - 12:30pm - Moses Brown Upper School

**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

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

**Potluck, Providence** - each First Sunday

**Sing-along, Saylesville** – 11:30 am each First Sunday

**Meeting for Business**

Providence: Second Sunday of each month at 12:00pm

Saylesville: Second Sunday of each month at 9:30am

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Religious Society of Friends

99 Morris Avenue

Providence, RI 02906