

The Provident FRIEND

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

June 23, 2018

Providence Monthly Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business 10th of 6th Month, 2018 Minutes

1. Friends gathered at the Saylesville meetinghouse at noon, with 20 present. Assistant presiding clerk Dan Lederer began the period of silent worship by reading the following queries taken from Pacific Yearly Meeting:

Do I live in thankful awareness of God's constant presence in my life?

Am I sensitive and obedient to the leadings of the Holy Spirit?

What steps am I taking to center my life and to stay open to continuing revelation?

2. The following announcements were read:

This year's NEYM Sessions will be from August 4 through August 9 at Castleton University, Castleton, Vermont. Registration is currently open at neym.org/sessions.

The impacts of contemporary economic changes and the needs of individuals and families are all around us. We sense the need, but ask, "What can I do?" Much as we ask this question today, Stephen Aldrich asked and responded in the 1800s by bequeathing a large portion of his estate to the R.I.-Smithfield Quarterly Meeting to provide emergency funding for Friends in need. This bequest continues today as the Stephen Aldrich Fund and is available to all members of the Meeting community seeking one-time emergency financial assistance. Individuals needing assistance or those who would like further information regarding the Fund should contact their Meeting's representative, Bruce Downing, at everymantoday@gmail.com. All contact is held in confidence.

3. For the Communications Committee, Dan Lederer brought a proposal for a policy regarding the publicizing of Meeting events. After minor editing, Friends approved the following: *Communications Committee maintains three online means for Friends to communicate items of interest to our Meeting community - the Meeting Email List also known as "the listserve," the Meeting Website, and the Meeting newsletter. The committee proposes that online publicizing of Meeting activities be via these means of communication whenever possible. There has been concern about the use of the Internet, and especially social media, to publicize Meeting events in other ways. Friends may reference a Meeting event on social media as long as they do so as individuals rather than as representing Meeting itself.*

4. Treasurer Peter Swaszek brought the year-end report on the Meeting's finances. They are good. Contributions this year, not including those made to the building fund, reached a record \$53,000 and we ended the year approximately \$800 in the black. Peter noted that expenses will rise next year as construction progresses and that next year's budget will call for increased contributions. He also noted that this is an unaudited report, and that any corrections will be presented in September. We note that it will be desirable to track income derived from the Saylesville meetinghouse separately from that from Providence and ask the treasurer to make this possible. We receive the report with thanks.

CALENDAR

Sunday, June 10
12 pm, PMM Business Meeting,
Saylesville Meetinghouse

Sunday, June 24, noon
10:00 am - 4:00 pm, NEYM RI-
Smithfield Quarterly
Meeting, Providence
Meetinghouse

Friday, June 29, 1:30 PM
Fellowship with Muslim
Neighbors, Masjid Al Kareem 39
Haskings Street, Providence

**Saturday, July 21, 10 am -
noon**, Saylesville Meetinghouse
Bookswap

**Saturday, August 4 - Thursday,
August 9**, NEYM Annual
Sessions, Castleton, VT

**Friday, August 31 - Monday,
September 3**
Art Camp 2018
Quaker camp for adult artists of
all media
Friends Camp, South China,
Maine

Sunday, September 9, noon,
Meeting for Business,
Saylesville Meetinghouse

5. Bruce Carlsten reported on the progress of the Providence meetinghouse expansion project. Much has taken place since the last report, including negotiations with contractors, arrangements with Moses Brown School concerning gas lines and drainage, and the unexpected discovery that the City of Providence has a "paper road" between our meetinghouse and the Moses Brown playing fields. Delays caused by these issues caused the loss of some subcontractors, but all now seems to be in place for moving forward, and the date of completion is now estimated for late October. Although the contractor has agreed to keep one bathroom available for our use, it would save time and money if we forego that option and make other arrangements for one to two weeks in late July. Friends agreed to allow the Building committee to proceed accordingly. We thank the committee for much hard work.

6. Bruce Downing reported on recent and planned activities at the Saylesville meetinghouse. With help from Friends from both the Saylesville and Providence worship communities, a considerable amount of general "sprucing up" has taken place to deal with clutter and make the space more inviting. Meeting for worship is being held regularly at 10:30 on first-day mornings with members of Ministry and Counsel attending, the meetinghouse is open for bookswap and tours on the third seventh-day of each month, and steps are being taken to make the site better known and more visible to the public. A recent marriage event held in conjunction with Hearthside House was successful, tomatoes and flowers have been planted, and other events are being planned, including a meeting of the Rhode Island Rights group on Sixth-month 17, shape-note singing on Sixth-month 23, an information table and open house for Lincoln's Heritage Celebration on Seventh-month 22, and something similar for Great Road Day on Ninth-month 22. Requests for volunteer help will some of these events will be sent out on the listserve. All Friends are invited to participate in both meetings for worship and special events. Finance Committee is currently overseeing events at Saylesville; anyone who may be involved in planning an event or meeting, or volunteering for a planned event, is reminded to contact Dan Lederer.

7. For the Peace and Social Action Committee, Steven Schwartz reported that the committee has been concentrating this past year on climate change, refugee issues, and issues involving our local community. Donations totaling \$5,500 were made to eleven groups: AHOPE, PrYSM AMOR (refugee work), Camp Street Ministries, Institute for the Study and Practice of Non-Violence, Islamic School of R.I., Dorcas International Institute of R.I., Environmental Council R.I., Central Falls High School ELO "How to Change the World", Pride Day table and parade, Rhode Island Coalition for the Homeless, Syrian American Medical Society. Steve shared information about the work supported by these donations. A concern was raised that FCNL was not included. This has in the past been supported by Peace and Social Action and we note that members of our Meeting have been active with an FCNL advocacy group. The committee will consider it for the current fiscal year.

We thank the committee for its work.

No further business appearing, we closed with a period of silent worship at 1:20 p.m., intending to meet next on the 9th of Ninth-month at noon at Saylesville.

Dan Lederer, Assistant Presiding Clerk
Rebecca Smith, Recording Clerk



We've Come This Far by Faith--In Faith We Can Go Farther

from Rebecca Leuchak for the Building Expansion Committee

This is it, Friends--we've broken ground. We have begun building! And we are in the last months of our fundraising efforts for our new space and its new possibilities for our community.

With gratitude to many of you for the gifts you have already offered to the Meeting, we ask that you take this opportunity to consider another contribution to help fulfill our plans to pay for the construction of our new wing.

For those who have thus far held back from participating in our fundraising efforts, this is a powerful time to make your own offering, no matter how much you can give. **From now until September 30, your donation will be matched**, thanks to the generosity of Friends who put forth the \$15,000 incentive. **That means that every gift given throughout the summer is effectively DOUBLED.**

So please step up, dig deep, and make a contribution! All gifts are appreciated, and every gift counts.

Contributions can be left in the meetinghouse collection box or mailed to our treasurer, Peter Swaszek, at 57 Brayton Street, East Greenwich, RI 02818. Please make a note on your check or enclose a message to indicate the donation is for the Building Expansion.

Again thanks for your support of the community, and best wishes for a wonderful summer!

Friends serving in the Building Expansion Fund-raising sub-committee:

David Bourns, Bruce Carlsten, Mike Hirtle, Dan Lederer, Rebecca Leuchak, Eugenia Marks, Betsy Zimmerman



Donations for Camp Street Food Pantry

from Eugenia Marks

Hunger doesn't take a vacation in summer. In fact, it comes home with kids who rely on regular meals at school for their primary nutrition. Our support for Camp Street Community Ministries' food pantry helps neighbors who face food insecurity. Please deposit food donations like peanut butter, canned tuna, cereal, and shelf milk in the box at Providence Friends Meeting for transport to CSCM.

PMM Friends Support RI PRIDE!

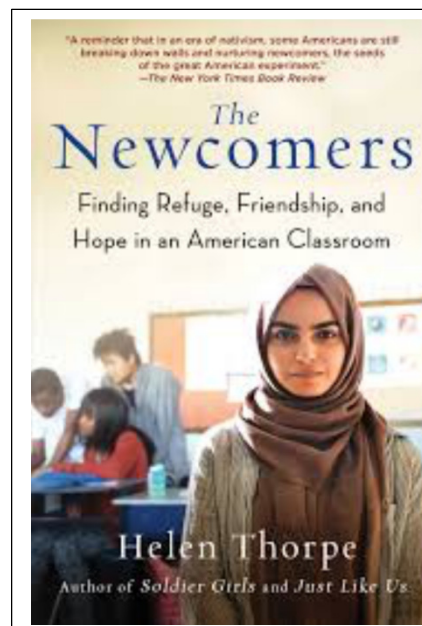
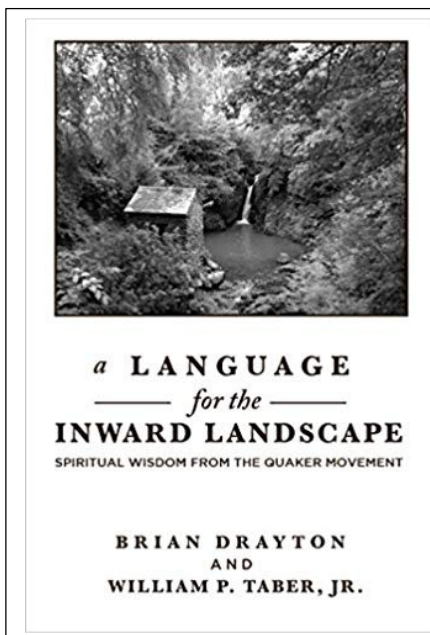
Providence Friends turned out to show love and support for our LGBTQ+ community at this year's Rhode Island Pride. As we've done in previous years, Friends staffed a booth at PrideFest where folks could find out about our meeting, collect some literature on Quakers, and get their faces painted (for free!). The Illuminated Night Parade at 8 pm was a joyous experience for those who took part. If you'd like to participate, it's not too early to put Pride on your calendar for mid-June next year. Many thanks to organizer [Morgan Lord](#) for leading us in what has become an annual endeavor!



Notes from the Library Committee

from Rebecca Smith

The Library at the Providence meetinghouse is undergoing a bit of re-arrangement; we ask Friends to be patient as we work. The sign-out basket is still in the same place on the top shelf. If you would like to borrow a book, please remove the borrowing card from the pocket at the back of the book, write your name, telephone number and the date on the card, and put the card in the basket marked "cards go here." When you bring the book back, put it the basket labeled for returns. It's meant to be simple! Some newly acquired books are displayed on the top shelf to the right of the baskets. They include essays by John Woolman, *Language for the Inward Landscape* by Brian Drayton, *The Newcomers* (about immigrant high school students), and others -- come take a look.



Clerk's Corner

from Rebecca Leuchak, Presiding Clerk

This is the start of a new feature in our monthly newsletter, a brief reflection from your presiding clerk. I hope you will [give me feedback on the ideas presented here](#). Your voice and thoughts are very much appreciated!

To everything there is a season....

Taking up the clerkship of our monthly meeting at this time, I feel a real tug of the seasons.

Here we are entering the summer months when many of us adjust schedules, perhaps with travel and some leisure time. Yet all too present in my mind, and for many of us these days, are the escalating issues that fracture our national identity. The time of here and now that we face brings much difficulty.

Perhaps you also feel this tug. We are all at the start of the summer season, but we are all also in a time which demands our full attention to the world around us. We cannot afford to take a vacation from the current condition of our world.

And then, simultaneously and assertively, I am aware that there is the third time of a deeper and larger scale, the time of the Spirit. This is the unending season of utmost importance, a longer view than the immediate, the centered place from which to hold concerns for our unsteady time. In the tug of the day to day I am trying to pay attention to the more enduring truth that we are all living in the season of the Spirit. This is the slow and solid time and place of grounding, of foundational centering in which Friends can reaffirm our core beliefs in humanity, in that Light within each and every person and living thing. We have in our Friends community that season of the Spirit, a home where each individual is respected and valued and listened to, for their glimpse of the truth.

This is where my attention to time lies, now more than ever: building a strong community of faith in the season of the Spirit. From this place we can move out into the worldly time with confidence. Together we are building a community of confidence in the power of love to overcome the obstacles before us. Together we can commit to the hard work of transforming what is broken, working hard with that love and compassion to heal and make our world whole.

At the start of these summer months, I have already had a brief time away and feel refreshed and energized for the work that lies ahead, for there is much work to do. So I will be at Meeting, holding all of these seasons in worship and ready to engage with you in deepening our faith, our community of support, and our commitment to building a world of love and kindness.

Enjoy the sweetness of summer, Friends! I am looking forward to our BEING....together!

Please note that the Provident Friend will be on summer hiatus until September, when our regularly scheduled Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business resumes. In the meantime, Friends are encouraged to send newsletter contributions, updates, and/or photos from summer travels to the editor at ProvidentFriend@providencefriends.org, and they'll appear in the fall. Have a wonderful summer!

Providence Monthly Meeting Contact List

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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 2nd & 4th 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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Providence, RI 02906