

# The Provident FRIEND

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

November 16, 2018

Providence Monthly Meeting for Worship  
with a Concern for Business  
11 of Eleventh month, 2018

## Minutes

1. Friends gathered at the Providence meetinghouse at noon, with 18 present. Presiding clerk Rebecca Leuchak began the period of silent worship by reading the following queries on Meeting for business, taken from New England Yearly Meeting *Faith and Practice*:

**Are meetings for business held in a spirit of worship and prayerful search for the way of Truth?**

**Are all members encouraged to use their talents in the service of the meeting?**

**Do you undertake your proper share of the work and financial support of the meeting?**

The clerk also read the following announcements:

2. As of the start of this month, Bruce Shaw has stepped down from the role of meetinghouse scheduler; for his service over many years we owe him many thanks. Dan Lederer is now performing those duties while we consider creating a new committee to manage the meetinghouse. To schedule an event, or for more information, please contact Dan at [scheduling@providencefriends.org](mailto:scheduling@providencefriends.org).
3. Peace and Social Action Committee has moved the next meeting of the white privilege reading group to December 2 at 8:30 a.m. to avoid conflict with the Thanksgiving holiday weekend. The next book will be *White Fragility* by Robin DiAngelo. All are welcome and child care can be arranged. Contact David Bourns or Eugenia Marks for more information.
4. Friends are reminded that we have a mid-week worship on Wednesdays at noon at Brown University in the Chaplain's suite, located in Page-Robinson Hall, 69 Brown Street (on the corner of Brown and Waterman streets), room 409. Contact Bill Monroe – [William.Monroe@Brown.edu](mailto:William.Monroe@Brown.edu) for more information.
5. Our annual Christmas Gathering will take place on Saturday, December 15th at 5pm with a potluck following. This is an annual tradition when we join together with Friends and family to sing traditional carols, share stories, poems and songs, experience the First Day School pageant, share silence, and then continue our celebration with fellowship and a potluck meal. If you play an instrument and would like to join the Silence is Golden orchestra, or if you would like to participate by sharing a song, favorite poem or short reading - as a soloist or with others - please contact John Lord at: [jonskydozer@msn.com](mailto:jonskydozer@msn.com) or contact Nina Berry or any member of the Program Committee.
6. Peace and Social Action Committee informs us that as a meeting community, we continue to support Camp Street Community Ministries' Food Pantry. Our food collection is also available to anyone who is in need. Please leave food, paper goods, and personal health and grooming items, which are not covered by "food stamps/SNAP", in the Apple Bag marked Camp Street on our foyer bench.
7. A memorial service for Richart Keller will be held on Saturday, January 26th at

## CALENDAR

### Wednesdays (Weekly)

**12 pm**, Mid-week Meeting for Worship  
Brown University Chaplain's Suite  
Page-Robinson Hall, 69 Brown Street  
Room 409 Contact Bill Monroe for more information  
[william\\_monroe@brown.edu](mailto:william_monroe@brown.edu)

### Saturday, November 17, 10 am-Noon

Bookswap, Saylesville Meetinghouse

### Friday, November 23, 1:30 pm

Fellowship with Muslim Neighbors  
Bring cookies to share, or just come to share a smile and good conversation!  
Masjid Al Kareem, 39 Haskins St., Providence

### Sunday, December 2

**8:30-10am**, Discussion Group on White Privilege, PMH Library  
Planned reading: [White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk about Racism](#), by Robin DiAngelo, Chapters 1-5

### Sunday, December 2

**11:15 am**, PMM Monthly Potluck, Providence Meetinghouse

### Sunday, December 9

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

### Saturday, December 15

**5 pm**, Christmas Gathering (followed by potluck) Providence Meetinghouse

2pm at Providence Meetinghouse. Rick was a deeply loved, long-time member of our Meeting who served the community faithfully as our presiding clerk and served on a number of Meeting committees over the years. His wife, Janet, also a dear former member of our community, invites all to come and celebrate Rick's life and memory.

8. From October's Quarterly Meeting for Business held at Smithfield Monthly Meeting, the Quarter is considering a name change from Rhode Island-Smithfield Quarterly Meeting to Southeast Quarterly Meeting, Friends in the monthly meetings are encouraged to discuss this proposed change. This will be a topic for discussion here at a time to be determined.

## Items for Consideration and Reports

9. For Finance Committee, Dan Lederer asked that Phebe Howland be added to the Meeting Finance Committee. She has agreed to serve. Friends approved.
10. Proposal for Monthly Meeting Committee Reorganization. A gathering of the Meeting's committee clerks this fall was followed by the formation of a group, consisting of Dan Lederer, Victoria Ekk, Bruce Shaw, Rebecca Leuchak, and Nina Berry, which met to consider possible changes to the Meeting's committees. Dan brought a proposal which would involve laying down certain committees and apportioning their tasks to others, creating four new committees, renaming one, and simplifying the schedule of committee appointments.

Funeral and Burial Grounds Committee would be laid down. Pastoral Care would absorb oversight of memorial services/funerals, and Property Committee would absorb maintenance of burial grounds.

Marriage Clearness Committee would be laid down and its function absorbed by Ministry and Counsel (which could appoint other suitable Friends on an *ad hoc* basis).

Quaker Education Support Committee would be laid down and its function absorbed by the Finance Committee.

The Scheduler position would be laid down and its functions would be carried out by the two new Meetinghouse Management Committees (one each for Saylesville and Providence), which would also handle all applications for meetinghouse use (both single events and recurring events), determine a host for each event (responsible for meetinghouse security), maintain an electronically-accessible calendar showing all events, write and administer meetinghouse use contracts, and revise guidelines for meetinghouse use as needed.

The Membership Recorder position would be laid down and its functions (documenting attendance at all Meetings for Worship, documenting changes in Meeting membership, and preparing statistical reports for NEYM) would be carried out by the new Membership Committee. This committee would also follow up with new attenders and with members unable to attend, communicate with older junior members, and invite and encourage membership.

The new Fundraising and Development Committee would organize fundraising events, promote annual giving, and pursue gifts to the Meeting's endowment.

The Program Committee would be renamed Special Events and would be responsible for the Christmas Gathering and other events, e.g. a May Breakfast.

Other committees would remain unchanged for the present.

Ministry and Counsel appointments would be for a six-year term, after which a member must rotate off for at least one year. All other committee appointments would be for one year at a time, with no limit on renewals.

After some discussion of the proposed changes, Friends approved.

11. Proposal to Meeting for Business from Peace and Social Action Committee regarding service to our Meeting. Eugenia Marks brought a proposal that the Meeting create a system that would help match willing volunteers with things they could do and to set a goal of a certain number of hours voluntary service per person per year. Specifically, this would involve the creation of a database of individuals' skills and contact information; this database would be available to committees looking for help with particular projects.

Friends were not comfortable with requiring/expecting a specific time commitment from each person or with the potential of appearing to judge the efforts of others. We also note that requests for assistance are already made in a variety of ways and question whether this proposed database would be practical to administer. Although we thank Peace and Social Action for giving thought to this topic, we prefer to leave individuals to follow their consciences. We note that there could be improved communication regarding ways in which Friends could contribute to the Meeting community, both as members of committees and on individual projects. We value and encourage our volunteers and thank them for their efforts.

12. Property Committee Reports. For property committee, Nina Berry provided the following report: The work on the Saylesville meetinghouse is almost done for the winter. Painting will take place next June. Storm windows will be installed as soon as they arrive. Over the winter, the painter will re-glaze the windows. The mason will stabilize the chimney at the end of November. The fence contractor will work on the fencing around the meetinghouse towards the end of the November.

Providence meetinghouse: As soon as we receive the Certificate of Occupancy for the expansion, we will organize putting the meetinghouse back together and cleaning it up. The Committee would like to thank Friends for putting away tables and chairs after coffee hour. We thank the Property Committee for its work on both buildings.

13. Building Expansion Committee Report. Bruce Carlsten reported on progress. The furnace is functioning; the lift is in and will be operational soon; some bathrooms are already functional and others will follow; interior and exterior work is proceeding; the nursery room door has been delayed but the room will be ready fairly soon. A project is being developed to cover a former window space with tiles to be made by First Day School and other members of the Meeting. We hope to have a Certificate of Occupancy in early December. There may be a celebratory event in late January.
14. Eugenia made a request that blank nametags be available for visitors and new members. We think this might be a good task for the new Membership committee. In a related matter, Betsy Cazden reported that the existing nametags have been untangled and placed on the bottom row of hooks. Some appear to belong to people who no longer attend, and some people have several nametags. Friends are requested to find their own and move it (only one!) to the upper row.

No further business appearing, we closed with a period of silent worship at 1:40 p.m., intending to meet next on the 9th of Twelfth month at noon at the Providence meetinghouse.

Rebecca Smith, recording clerk  
Rebecca Leuchak, presiding clerk

## **Mark Your Calendars for the 2018 Christmas Gathering**

from the Program Committee

The Christmas Gathering is an annual tradition when we join together with Friends and family to sing traditional carols, share stories, poems and songs, experience the First Day School “pageant,” share silence and then continue our celebration with fellowship and a potluck meal.

This year’s date is Saturday, December 15 from 5 until 7pm.

John Lord is organizing the Gathering, and if you would like to participate by sharing a song, favorite poem or short reading—as a soloist or with others—please feel free to let John know. He is away until late November, so contact him by email or contact Nina Berry or any member of the Program Committee.

## **An Appeal from 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 \$101,100, out of which \$65,925, or 66%, is needed from contributions. During our last fiscal year we received donations from 60 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 \$1100 for us to avoid a deficit at the end of the fiscal year, this average representing an increase of 17% compared to the last fiscal year. Clearly \$1100 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. We trust that each of you will do what you can to support our Meeting activities and obligations financially.

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 foyer of the meetinghouse 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.

Best wishes for a happy holiday season!

## **Nurturing Spiritual Leadings**

Bill Monroe and Rebecca Leuchak spent a weekend recently at Woolman Hill, the Quaker Retreat Center in Deerfield, Mass. The workshop they attended focused on how monthly meetings might nurture spiritual gifts and support personal leadings within their membership. For example, that might include tending to a member's service work that deepens the life of the monthly meeting community, or traveling for public ministry doing the work of social justice in the wider world. The workshop was led by Kristina and Callid Keefe-Perry of Fresh Pond Meeting, MA. For more information on Woolman Hill and its programs, visit the website at <http://woolmanhill.org/>. To learn more about the workshop and the topic of nurturing spiritual leadings, talk to Bill and Rebecca.

## **New Meetinghouse Scheduler**

As of November 1, Dan Lederer will be doing the scheduling for the Providence meetinghouse, which means that he will need to receive any and all requests for use of the building, including the date, the time, and the room or rooms needed. The best way to submit a request is to send it to his email address, [dlederer1@verizon.net](mailto:dlederer1@verizon.net), or you can send it to [scheduling@providencefriends.org](mailto:scheduling@providencefriends.org). He will be maintaining an online calendar, which you can see at any time by clicking on [https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1ZfwugkmpSscH9IWR7X1NP\\_Lgdes-4vSf](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1ZfwugkmpSscH9IWR7X1NP_Lgdes-4vSf)

This should bring you to a group of PDF documents, one for each month starting with November and continuing through June 2019. It would be a good idea to check the calendar first before asking to use the building. If you responded to Bruce's recent request for committee meeting times, your event may already be there. Please contact Dan if you find any errors in the calendar or if you encounter any problems scheduling the meetinghouse.

## **Notice of Next White Privilege Discussion Group**

The next discussion has been moved to moved to Dec. 2 at the regular 8:30 am time, to avoid conflict with the Thanksgiving holiday weekend. We will discuss chapters 1-5 from the book *White Fragility* by Robin DiAngelo, as suggested and led by David Bourns. At this writing, Amazon sells it for \$13 for a Kindle edition, and \$11 for a paperback edition.

## **Conanicut Meeting Winter Worship**

Conanicut Meeting has moved to its "Winter Quarters" and will be meeting at the Quest Montessori School, located at 1150 Boston Neck Road (Rt 1A) in Narragansett. Meeting for Worship starts at 10:30 with social time before.

## **Seth Kolker Sends Greetings from Beijing**

Seth Kolker, member of our Providence Friends Meeting community and builder of an important youth leadership initiative for social change at Central Falls High School, sends us news from China. As Friends remember, Seth was accepted into the Schwarzman Scholars program in which he is currently pursuing a master's degree in Global Affairs at Tsinghua University in Beijing. His program gives him the opportunity to focus on global affairs and development of leadership skills so that as an educator he can better prepare American youth for twenty-first century global

citizenship. When he left us in early summer, he promised to keep us updated on his experiences. Here is a note he sent recently to the meeting:

"It's been an exciting start to my time in Beijing. Mandarin classes are intense, filled with tonal corrections and laughter at our many mistakes. Today, I made a mixed up a fourth-tone "paidui" (to stand in line) with a first-tone "paidui" (party) and apparently said that when the subway station was crowded, I had to party. I've been confused and impressed and troubled by some of the dizzying information about how this country has changed and functions today, but it leaves us all nicely humble and curious to know more. The cohort is the program's biggest strength: people from 40 countries are packed together in one building that contains our dorms, classes, library, and dining hall - so it's virtually impossible to walk 50 meters without running into a fascinating conversation. No guarantees yet, but I will hope to make it to RI during our February break to see all of you! I've been missing the community at the Providence Meeting, and send warm greetings from the other side of the world."

## **A Meeting Network** from Communications Committee

For several years Communications Committee has been engaged in a project called "A Meeting Network". The idea is this: Friends are asked to answer, in writing, two questions: (1) What kinds of work do you, or did you, do? (2) What are you most passionate about, and why? What the committee has done is compile the responses and make them available to our Meeting community.

In regard to question # 1, you may have had the experience of seeing someone at Meeting for months or even years and of having no idea what line of work that person is in. This is important because a group of Friends such as ours can serve as a useful resource if we know something about each person's area of expertise. Question # 2 is probably more fun to answer, since we're all passionate about something. What is it that you still like to do even when you're too tired to do anything else? It could have something to do with your work, or it could be a sport, a hobby, or involvement in a worthy cause. Maybe you'll find out that someone else at Meeting shares this same passion, or maybe your interest will inspire someone else to pursue it too. There are all kinds of possibilities for greater connectedness once we learn more about what each of us finds most intriguing.

So if you haven't contributed to the project, please consider doing so. This applies especially to Friends who are new to Meeting but also to some members and long-term attenders. Also, this is an opportunity to revise your current entry as needed. You can send your response, which can be as brief or as lengthy as you like, to [communications@providentfriends.org](mailto:communications@providentfriends.org).

## **Clerk's Corner: It Takes Two to Tango** from Rebecca Leuchak, Presiding Clerk

At a recent Quaker workshop that Bill and I attended, the metaphor offered for the complex relations within our monthly meetings was one of dance partners in a tango. We all know that ballroom dances require a partnership. Perhaps we have even experienced the challenge, as many of us have tried lessons and found them more or less satisfying. Simple moves of two people together may be easily executed, but the more complex choreography proves quite challenging. We also know that to become good at partner dances, we must practice, practice, practice!

When we think of tango, really good tango, we are reminded that this dance form gets its particular beauty and excitement from the turn-taking of balance and imbalance, the push and pull of bodies moving in time to the music. It is never a solo performance, and the dependence of each dancer on their partner is the key to success. Sustaining the perfectly balanced back-and-forth of weight shift – first one supports and then the other takes their turn – is paramount. One person can make daring and gravity-defying moves thanks to the counter-balance provided by their partner. Likewise, if the partner were suddenly not there, the dancer in their extended pose would fall. Support and extension must happen simultaneously for the tango to work. And as we watch the dancers in action, we are thrilled by the dynamic sense of energy that this back-and-forth play of mental and physical forces communicates.

In a skillful tango, the couple is able to make great sweeps through space, turning in an instant, changing direction, speeding up and slowing down again, again all in connection to the music that guides them.



So too in our meeting community we rely on and support each other as we move to the music of the Spirit. At times we lead and then we follow. At times we support and then we are supported. We give and follow cues by turns, as we act together. When our meeting is working well, we too can make great strides, initiate and respond to impulses, accomplish great movement, extend ourselves beyond our own support by relying on the support of others, and thus bring ourselves collectively into graceful and effective action.

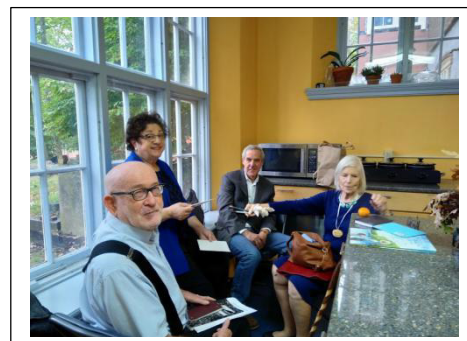
We are reminded that what lies behind every tango performance is rigorous self-training—practice, commitment, determination. In tango each partner must bring that personal training to the practice of the dance so that when partner comes together with partner, each is aware of and responsive to the other’s inner impulses, and both are able to be responsive and initiative in turns.

So too, our practice of Quakerism in community relies on attentiveness to the Spirit, a sense of energy and dynamism in relation, and the personal spiritual preparation that each one of us can bring. We come together on Sunday for worship, we participate in activities and committee service in our Meeting community, we discern and act, and we ready ourselves for the dance as much as we can. Always we are listening to that which guides us: that eternal music of the Spirit.

I have always loved dance. Perhaps the tango metaphor resonates so strongly with me because in both my Quaker faith and in dance, I see the deep connection between people who, through collective action, create something powerful and beautiful.

Friends, with the possibilities of that power and beauty in mind, do join me in the dance!

Rebecca Leuchak, Presiding Clerk



### Photos

Top - Paula Palmer (left) with Friends  
Bottom Left - Hospitality Committee’s Ministry of Potluck  
Bottom Right - Pastoral Care Committee at work

**Providence Monthly Meeting Contact List**

Clerk: **Rebecca Leuchak** [clerk@providencefriends.org](mailto:clerk@providencefriends.org)  
Assistant Presiding Clerk: **Dan Lederer** [assistclerk@providencefriends.org](mailto:assistclerk@providencefriends.org)  
Recording Clerk: **Rebecca Smith** [recordingclerk@providencefriends.org](mailto:recordingclerk@providencefriends.org)  
Treasurer: **Peter Swazek** [treasurer@providencefriends.org](mailto:treasurer@providencefriends.org)  
Ministry & Counsel: **Bruce Shaw** [ministryandcounsel@providencefriends.org](mailto:ministryandcounsel@providencefriends.org)  
Pastoral Care Committee: **Dieter Gomes** [pastoralcare@providencefriends.org](mailto:pastoralcare@providencefriends.org)  
Finance: **Dan Lederer** [finance@providencefriends.org](mailto:finance@providencefriends.org)  
Peace & Social Action: **Steve Schwartz** [peaceandsocial@providencefriends.org](mailto:peaceandsocial@providencefriends.org)  
Social & Hospitality: **Dede Carlsten** [socialandhospitality@providencefriends.org](mailto:socialandhospitality@providencefriends.org)  
Religious Education: **Elsie Morse and Victoria Ekk** [religioused@providencefriends.org](mailto:religioused@providencefriends.org)  
Adult Religious Education: **Zona Douthit** [adulted@providencefriends.org](mailto:adulted@providencefriends.org)  
Communications: **Dan Lederer** [communications@providencefriends.org](mailto:communications@providencefriends.org)  
Program Committee: **Nina Berry** [program@providencefriends.org](mailto:program@providencefriends.org)  
Marriage Clearness: **Erin Hazlett** [marriage@providencefriends.org](mailto:marriage@providencefriends.org)  
Library: **Rebecca Smith** [library@providencefriends.org](mailto:library@providencefriends.org)  
Archive: [archivist@providencefriends.org](mailto:archivist@providencefriends.org)  
Property: **Bob Elliott and Nina Berry** [property@providencefriends.org](mailto:property@providencefriends.org)  
Funeral & Burial: **Matt Hackman** [funeralandburial@providencefriends.org](mailto:funeralandburial@providencefriends.org)  
Newsletter: **Jen McFadden** [providentfriend@providencefriends.org](mailto:providentfriend@providencefriends.org)  
Email List Moderator: **Dan Lederer** [list@providencefriends.org](mailto:list@providencefriends.org)  
Website: **Sam Schifman** [webclerk@providencefriends.org](mailto:webclerk@providencefriends.org)  
Moses Brown School Liaison: **Betsy Zimmerman** [liaison@providencefriends.org](mailto:liaison@providencefriends.org)  
To schedule the Meetinghouse: **Dan Lederer** [scheduling@providencefriends.org](mailto:scheduling@providencefriends.org)  
Adult Religious Education: **Zona Douthit** [adulted@providencefriends.org](mailto:adulted@providencefriends.org)

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

I

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

**Wednesday** - Noon-12:45 pm Brown University in  
Page-Robinson Hall, Room 409

**Potluck, Providence** - each First Sunday

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

**Meeting for Business**

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

**The Provident FRIEND**

Newsletter of

Providence Monthly Meeting of the

Religious Society of Friends

99 Morris Avenue

Providence, RI 02906