

The Provident FRIEND

November 16, 2021

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MEETING CALENDAR

Sunday, Nov 21, 10:00 AM, Meeting for Worship (Zoom and Indoors)

Sunday, Nov 28, 10:00 AM, Meeting for Worship (Zoom and Indoors)

Sunday, Dec 5, 10:00 AM, Meeting for Worship (Zoom and Indoors)

Sunday, Dec 12, 10:00 AM, Meeting for Worship (Zoom and Indoors)

Sunday, Dec 12, 11:45 AM, Meeting for Business (Zoom)

Sunday, Dec 19, Meeting for Worship (Zoom and Indoors)

Friday Dec 24, 4:30 PM, Candlelight Service at Saylesville (Zoom)

Saturday, Dec 25, Christmas Day

**Providence Monthly Meeting for Worship
with a Concern for Business
14th of Eleventh Month, 2021
Minutes**

riends gathered by Zoom technology a little before noon with 15 present.

Presiding clerk Victoria Ekk began the period of silent worship by reading the following queries taken from NEYM *Faith and Practice* 2014, Chapter 11: Advices and Queries (approved by NEYM):

What calls us into a Religious Society?

Are we open to the many waFys Spirit may speak to us?

What does Love require of us today? What does Love require of us right now?

The clerk read announcements concerning the life of the meeting:

- The Annual Appeal letter is out and we are reminded that the season of giving is near! Be as generous as you are able and help our Meeting actively work towards greater social justice and the needs of our community.
- Camp Street Community Ministries needs donations of Thanksgiving foods or monetary donations. Items such as stuffing, canned yams, green beans, cranberry sauce and fruit, and packets of turkey gravy can be brought to the enclosed porch at 11 Methyl Street (Eugenia's house), Providence by 8 pm November 14. Monetary donations can go directly to Camp Street Ministries.

- Zona Douthit is serving as Interim Clerk of the Pastoral Care Committee
- Saylesville Meeting is ready to set up their annual Light Year display. You can help by sponsoring a light for a donation of \$10. The sign up form is included in the attachments [sent to the email list].
- Dorcas International needs new or gently used household items and furniture to help set up homes for refugees and other immigrant groups. There is an attachment [sent to the email list] with a list of items needed and information on how to get these to Dorcas.
- Upcoming events:
 - Interfaith Thanksgiving Gathering Tuesday November 23, 2021, 7 PM at Central Congregational Church
 - The Tomaquag Museum is featuring Friend Pierre Morenon in a virtual presentation titled: Rediscovering Lost Innocence: Archaeology at the State Home and School on November 29, 6:00-7:15 pm.

The following items of business were brought forward:

1. **Report from Southeast Quarterly Meeting.** Victoria Ekk reported that she attended the meeting held on the 17th of last month. This is where you can access the [Southeast Quarterly minutes for October 17, 2021.](#)
2. **Providence meetinghouse reopening proposal.** The Providence Meetinghouse Management Committee brought a proposal to allow indoor worship in the Providence meetinghouse by those who are fully vaccinated and masked, with open windows, a sign-in sheet, and access only to the meeting room and the upstairs bathrooms. In discussion, it was noted that in-person First Day School and Nursery Care remain unavailable for now but that fully vaccinated children may attend the regular meeting for worship with their parents; a sentence to this effect will be added to the proposal, along with a note that First Day School continues remotely. It was also noted that the concurrent Zoom meeting will continue, including a resumption of the hybrid experiment. Friends approved and plan to begin indoor worship again next Sunday. The revised version of the protocol is included as part of these minutes.
3. **Saylesville meetinghouse proposal.** At the request of Ministry and Counsel, the Saylesville Meetinghouse Management Committee brought a proposal to codify the practice of in-person worship at Saylesville by those who are vaccinated and masked, with a sign-in sheet and open windows. Friends approved the proposal with minor

changes of wording. the revised version is included as part of these minutes.

4. **Nursery.** Friends noted that the lack of nursery care is an impediment to attendance by young parents. The Clerk will gather a working group to consider possible solutions.

No further business appearing, we closed with a period of silent worship at 1:00 p.m., intending to meet next on the 12th of 12th month.

Respectfully submitted,

Victoria Ekk, presiding clerk

Rebecca Smith, recording clerk

Proposal from the Providence Meetinghouse Management Committee Regarding Meeting for Worship in the Meetinghouse, November 2021

The Management Committee is aware that, despite the ongoing pandemic and approaching winter months, many Friends would like to return to in-person Meeting for Worship inside the meetinghouse. While it is impossible to eliminate the ongoing risk of COVID, the Management Committee is proposing the following protocol to allow Meeting for Worship to take place while maintaining the safest possible environment for Friends who are most vulnerable to the adverse effects of COVID. As a Meeting, we have a collective responsibility for each other that requires us to reach beyond our personal preferences to consider the safety of all during this time. Zoom Meeting for Worship will continue.

Protocol to attend in-person Meeting for Worship:

- Anyone attending Meeting for Worship in the meetinghouse will need to verify full vaccination against COVID. This can be done in advance by submitting evidence of full COVID vaccination to the management committee clerk or by presenting a vaccination card upon entering the meetinghouse. (In order to verify vaccination status in advance, Friends can send a photo of their vaccination card or scan it and send a copy via email.) The management committee will maintain a list of Friends who have verified their vaccination status, and this list will be available to the greeters each First Day.
- Fully vaccinated and masked children over five years old are welcome to attend Meeting for Worship with their parents. First Day School continues remotely.

- Two greeters will be present each First Day. One will be from Ministry and Counsel and serve on the Facing Bench. The second greeter will be recruited by the Hospitality Committee. The greeters will unlock the meetinghouse and will ensure that anyone attending has presented evidence of full vaccination, has signed in providing contact information in case notification is necessary, and is wearing a mask covering the nose and mouth. Greeters will take responsibility for sending a copy of the sign-in list to the management committee clerk after each session.
- One of the greeters will remain in the foyer during the worship hour, and the other will serve on the Facing Bench. If two greeters are not available, Meeting will be cancelled that First Day.
- The parking area will be available but entrance to the meetinghouse will only be at the front door. Those with mobility issues should use the handicapped parking spaces in front of the building or along the street.
- Worship will take place only in the worship room; the upstairs bathrooms will be available. Other areas of both the upstairs and downstairs will not be used.
- During worship, windows in the worship room will be open partially to allow for cross ventilation. The shades will be raised all the way or at least above the first set of windows. The air purifier will be on. Worshippers will wear masks continuously and will maintain social distance. Anyone who is ill will not attend.
- After worship, Friends will leave the building. Any socializing will take place outside. The greeters will turn off the air purifier, close all windows, roll down the shades, exit the meetinghouse, and lock up.
- If the protocol is not followed by all, the greeters will announce that Meeting for Worship must end and ask everyone to leave the building.

If Meeting for Business approves this proposal, Management requests the authorization to close the meetinghouse if conditions of the pandemic worsen or our Meeting experiences increased COVID infections.

The Committee will continue to monitor the COVID situation and looks forward to being able to allow us to return to our normal Meeting for Worship without this protocol.

Proposal from the Saylesville Meetinghouse Management Committee Regarding Meeting for Worship in the Meetinghouse—November 2021

The Saylesville Meetinghouse Management Committee is responding to the request of the

Ministry and Counsel Committee to propose holding in-person Meeting for Worship inside the Saylesville Meetinghouse with a protocol to maintain the safest possible environment for Friends during the COVID pandemic.

Protocol to attend in-person Meeting for Worship:

- Anyone attending Meeting for Worship in the Saylesville meetinghouse will need to verify full vaccination against COVID. This can be done in advance by submitting evidence of full COVID vaccination to the management committee clerk or by presenting a vaccination card upon entering the meetinghouse. (In order to verify vaccination status in advance, Friends can send a photo of their vaccination card or scan it and send a copy via email.) The management committee clerk, or the clerk's designee, will maintain a list of Friends who have verified their vaccination status, and this list will be available to the greeter each First Day.
- The requirement for full vaccination means that unvaccinated adults or children may not attend but are invited to attend alternative worship available through the Meeting.
- A greeter will be present each First Day. The greeter will ensure that anyone attending has presented evidence of full vaccination, has signed in providing contact information in case notification is necessary, and is wearing a mask covering the nose and mouth. Extra masks will be available for anyone who qualifies to attend Meeting for Worship but forgets to bring a mask. Greeters will take responsibility for sending a copy of the sign-in list to the management committee clerk after each session.
- The greeter will welcome fully vaccinated and masked participants. The greeter will ensure that no person enters who is not fully vaccinated and masked. If a breach occurs the Meeting shall end.
- During worship, windows in the worship room will be open partially to allow for cross ventilation. Worshippers will wear masks continuously and will maintain social distance. Anyone who is ill will not attend.
- After worship, Friends will leave the building. Any socializing will take place outside. The greeter will close all windows, exit the meetinghouse, and lock up.

If Meeting for Business approves this proposal, Management requests the authorization to close the Saylesville meetinghouse if conditions of the pandemic worsen or our Meeting experiences increased COVID infections.



Nurturing the Meeting Community

from Rebecca Leuchak, Clerk, Fundraising and Development Committee

Dear Friends,

We are approaching that time of year when we traditionally give thanks for the many blessings in our lives.

My message to you is composed as a mindful act of honoring you and all that you contribute to our vibrant Friends community in so many ways. It is a prayerful act of holding you in the Light as a member of our corporate spiritual body.

This November I call upon you to consider your commitment to our important Quaker testimony of stewardship. Now is the time to support our circle of faith, to give back to our Society of Friends. To express thanks for our many blessings. For during these almost two years of challenge with the pandemic, we have innovated creative new ways to worship; some gathering in the golden light and gentle breeze outside the Meetinghouse, others meeting each other every Sunday morning from the safety and comfort of home on Zoom. Working together, Providence Friends have found ways to continue to nurture our youth with innovative programs in-person and virtually, and to

enrich our spiritual seeking with programs for adults on spiritual development and in-depth study of social issues. We have responsibly considered the health and safety of our membership, provided support for groups in the wider community, and provided a safe place in our Meetinghouse for the needs of others.

We can look back on this past year with confidence and gratitude that we have met the challenges facing us and have lived into closer, ever more faithful attendance to the Spirit. And we look to a future that promises more opportunities to test us and our faithfulness. For that on-going journey, the Meeting asks you for your full support. May we promise each other to work together and may I ask you to find a way, in any amount, to financially contribute to our corporate efforts now.

Thank you, and THANK YOU for all the ways that so many of you contribute to the Meeting in non-financial ways as well. Together we nurture the spiritual formation and ensure the strength of our community. May our actions make the world a better place.

Contributions can be made out to Providence Friends Meeting and sent to our treasurer Peter Swaszek, P.O.Box 1787, Kingston, RI 02881.

Meeting for Worship During COVID: An Important Change

Friends are once again holding in-person meeting for worship in the Providence and Saylesville meetinghouses. Please see the Meeting for Business minutes above for the protocols at each meetinghouse.

In addition, we continue to hold our online Meeting for Worship, also at 10:00 AM on First Days. The Zoom link is sent to our Providence Monthly Meeting members and attenders via email on Fridays and Saturdays.

Visit to Tomaquag Museum

On October 16, about 20 friends from the Southeast Quarter enjoyed a picnic lunch outside the Tomaquag Museum and then a guided visit by a young staff member. According to Wikipedia, "The Tomaquag Indian Memorial Museum is an indigenous museum in Exeter, RI. The museum was founded by anthropologist Eva Butler and a Narragansett and Wampanoag woman named Princess Red Wing in the 1950s. It is one of the oldest tribal

museums in the country....The museum showcases the history and culture of the native peoples who have lived and currently reside in southeastern New England including the Narragansett, Niantic, Pokanoket, Wompanoag and Nipmuck.”

Note that the museum is featuring Meeting member Pierre Morenon in a virtual presentation entitled “Rediscovering Lost Innocence: Archaeology at the State Home and School” on Monday November 29, 6:00-7:15 PM. You can register for this event by going to <https://www.tomaquagmuseum.org/events>



Letter from NEYM re the Bayard Rustin Fund

October 15, 2021

Dear Friends,

At Sessions 2021, the body approved a proposal by the Yearly Meeting Friends United Meeting Committee to set up a new revolving fund, provisionally named the “NEYM Bayard Rustin Fund for Support and Action.” The intention of the new fund is to

“support LGBTQIA+ organizations in East Africa, Central and South America, India, the Caribbean, and North America.” The body also approved allowing monthly meetings to redirect (to this fund) the portion of their Yearly Meeting contribution which would otherwise go to Friends United Meeting. This redirection will “assist monthly meetings in their witness as well as target support to initiatives that resist current anti-trans youth legislation by increasing the visibility of efforts and opportunities for collaboration across NEYM.”

The Fund is open now and ready to receive contributions from monthly meetings and individuals. Contributions from individuals may be made by check sent to the Yearly Meeting office, with “Rustin Fund” written in the note field. The Permanent Board will provide an amount for initial funding in consultation with the Treasurer and the Finance Committee.

This fund and redirection policy replace the withholding mechanism that some monthly meetings have used in the past to prevent any part of their contributions to the Yearly Meeting from going to Friends United Meeting. From this time forward, monthly meetings who wish to prevent any part of their contributions to the Yearly Meeting from going to Friends United Meeting should now send in their full contribution, but indicate in a letter to the Treasurer and Accounts Manager that they wish to have the applicable percentage (currently 1.4%) redirected to the Rustin Fund. The Accounts Manager will do that transfer and confirm to the monthly meeting treasurer that this transfer has been made. Meetings that make general contributions to the Yearly Meeting may also make additional contributions directly to the Rustin Fund.

Per Yearly Meeting Minute 2021-79, while “the old withholding mechanism provided a separate fund to make up the difference, the Clerk’s best sense is that Friends do not feel the need for this now. Any individual can give to FUM at any time.” To that end, we are closing the revolving fund formally used for this purpose.

Yours faithfully,

Robert Murray, Treasurer, NEYM

treasurer@neym.org

Frederick Martin, Accounts Manager, NEYM

accountsManager@neym.org

Clerk's Corner: Gratitude and Outreach

from Vicky Ekk

This month's queries:

What calls us into a Religious Society? Do we grow together in faithfulness?

What does Love require of us today?" "What does Love require of us right now?"

Are we open to the many ways Spirit may speak to us?

In this beautiful land where we live, November is a month when we remember to be grateful for the people and things that make our lives enjoyable and worthwhile. Focusing on gratefulness is likely to bring a variety of feelings brought on by memories and by looking forward to celebrating time together with family and friends. For those far away from family, there may be a bit of melancholy over the distance, but in this day of smartphones and FaceTime, the miles can magically shrink!

As a Quaker community, what can we be grateful for this November? We can be grateful that our community has survived through the limitations placed by the COVID pandemic by utilizing new communication tools. We can be grateful that despite breakthrough infections, PMM's fully vaccinated members and attenders are still with us and in good shape. We can be grateful that during the last few weeks we have expanded our contact with one another by attending outdoor Meeting for Worship and by visiting one or two Friends at a time with safety protocols in place.

The pandemic has made us aware that we cannot control everything. As a matter of fact, we are much more flexible now because we have not been able to control much at all! Douglas Abrams writes: "We are not created for independence or self-sufficiency, but for interdependence and mutual support." [Abrams (2016), p. 211] Some of us have met on Zoom or in small "pods", but not all our members and attenders have been able to join us and we miss them as we miss our "normal" activities and events. We need each other. How can we reach out to one another as we begin our way back towards the "new normal"? What does love require of us today, right now?

Perhaps it is time to reach out to one another and reconnect person to person, soul to soul. We know that the Spirit speaks to each of us differently in accordance with our own spiritual

path. What does the Spirit, the Inward Teacher, the Light, say to you and how can you share that with someone in our community to be part of growing together in faithfulness? Let's reach out to one another in gratitude this month. The Meeting Directory is a perfect tool to help us do just that!

Address for Contributions

The address for contributions to Meeting is as follows:

Providence Monthly Meeting
c/o Peter Swaszek
P O Box 1787
Kingston, RI 02881

The Provident FRIEND

Newsletter of
Providence Monthly Meeting of the
Religious Society of Friends
99 Morris Avenue
Providence, RI 02906
(401) 331-4218 or <http://providencefriends.org>

Providence Monthly Meeting Contact List

Presiding Clerk: **Vicky Ekk** clerk@providencefriends.org
Assistant Presiding Clerk: **Rebecca Leuchak**
Recording Clerk: **Rebecca Smith**
Treasurer: **Peter Swaszek**
Ministry & Counsel: **Dan Lederer**

Peace & Social Action: **Steve Schwartz**
Hospitality: **Eugenia Marks and Judy Shaw**
Religious Education: **Eugenia Marks and Wendy Virgadamo**
Communications: **Dan Lederer**
Special Events: **John Lord**
Library: **Rebecca Smith**
Archive: **Dan Lederer**
Property: **Bob Elliott and Ann Durant**
Burial Grounds: **Matt Hackman**
Providence Meetinghouse Management: **Nina Berry**
Saylesville Meetinghouse Management: **Bob Watt**
Newsletter: **Jen McFadden and Dan Lederer** providentfriend@providencefriends.org
Email list moderator: **Dan Lederer**
Website: **Sam Schiffman** webclerk@providencefriends.org
Moses Brown School Liaison: **Ariana Steele**
Young Adult Friends: **Nia Thomas**
Adult Religious Education: **Ben Lamm**
To Schedule the Meetinghouse: **Dan Lederer**
Questions and Information: **Steve Schwartz** info@providencefriends.org
