

# The Provident FRIEND

Dec 14, 2021

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

## Providence Monthly Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business 12th of Twelfth Month, 2021 Minutes

Friends gathered by Zoom technology at 12:15 with 16 present.

Presiding clerk Victoria Ekk began the period of silent worship by reading the following queries taken from New England Yearly Meeting's *Faith and Practice* 2014 and 1985:

*Do I listen for Spirit even when the words are foreign to me? Is my own understanding of God enriched by other people's experience of the Divine?* (F&P 2014)

*To whom or to what am I accountable?* (F&P 2014)

*Do I uphold the right of all persons to justice and dignity?* (F&P 1985)

The clerk read announcements concerning the life of the meeting.

The following items of business were brought forward:

**Afghan Refugee Needs.** Sarah Morenon brought information about possible ways to assist refugees being resettled in our area. Small donated items may be left with Eugenia Marks who is able to bring them to Dorcas House. Volunteers are also needed to help clean and set up apartments. Sarah will coordinate volunteers for dates to be determined. Those wishing to volunteer should contact Sarah at [morenons@aol.com](mailto:morenons@aol.com).

**Finance Committee Quarterly Report and Requests.** Treasurer Peter Swaszek presented the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter financial report. At the halfway point of the fiscal year, overall income is above 50% and expenses are below it. However, the expense lines for Insurance and for Sewer and Water at the Providence meetinghouse are running ahead of budget, and the Committee requested approval for the Treasurer to overspend these lines as follows: to spend up to \$8,048.00 on line 24 (Insurance) and up to \$2,000.00 on line 28 (Sewer and Water). Friends approved.

**Burial Grounds Committee proposal.** The Committee brought a proposal to revise its description in our Handbook. The major changes are updated fees for plots, the addition of

### CALENDAR

**Saturday, Dec 18, Noon,** Exhibit at URI (Carpool)

**Sunday, Dec 19, 10:00 AM,** Meeting for Worship (Zoom and Indoors)

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

**Saturday, Dec 25,** Christmas Day

**Sunday, Dec 26, 10:00 AM,** Meeting for Worship (Zoom and Indoors)

**Wednesday, Dec 29, 7:00 PM,** Movie Night (Zoom and Indoors)

**Sunday, Jan 2, 10:00 AM,** Meeting for Worship (Zoom and Indoors)

**Sunday, Jan 9, 10:00 AM,** Meeting for Worship (Zoom and Indoors)

**Sunday, Jan 9, 12:15 PM,** Meeting for Business (Zoom)

**Saturday, Jan 15, Noon,** Memorial Service for Jeanne Whitaker (Zoom)

**Sunday, Jan 16, 10:00 AM,** Meeting for Worship (Zoom and Indoors)

more information about record-keeping, and a "Restrictions" section, which sets out limits on what can be done with said plots. Friends approved.

**Gathering at Providence proposed.** We are still unable to gather for coffee hour and fellowship after our weekly Meetings, and many Friends feel this as a lack. We request that the Providence Meetinghouse Management Committee devise a plan for increasing opportunities for social gatherings and for returning to use of the full meetinghouse as and when possible, and report back to the Monthly Meeting.

No further business appearing, we closed with a period of silent worship at 1:05 p.m., intending to meet next on the 9th of First month 2022.

Respectfully submitted,  
Victoria Ekk, presiding clerk  
Rebecca Smith, recording clerk

## **Meeting for Worship During COVID: In-Person Worship Continues**

Friends are once again holding in-person meeting for worship in the Providence and Saylesville meetinghouses, with safety protocols approved at Meeting for Business In November. 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.

## **Exhibit at URI December 18**

You are welcome to Join us in a carpool to the URI exhibit of *Away from Home: Native American Boarding School Stories* on Saturday, December 18. We'll meet at at noon at the Providence meetinghouse to arrive on campus by 1:00 PM. Please contact [clerk@providencesfriends.org](mailto:clerk@providencesfriends.org).

## **Christmas Eve Candlelight Service December 24**

Join us for the Christmas Eve Candlelight Service on December 24, 2021 at 4:30 PM. This meeting will be held online from the Saylesville meetinghouse. You will see the Zoom link on the Meeting Email List on December 20.



**Memorial Service for Jeanne Whitaker January 15**  
*from Rebecca Leuchak*

Jeanne Theis Whitaker passed away peacefully on October 25, 2021, at the age of 95, at the Kendal at Longwood retirement community in Kennett Square, PA. She became a practicing Quaker during her student years at Swarthmore College. Jeanne joined the Providence Friends Meeting in the mid-1960's, when she moved to nearby Norton, MA to join the French Department at Wheaton College.

A divorced single mother, Jeanne brought her two sons, Mark and Paul, to Meeting almost every Sunday. During her 35-year career at Wheaton, and for a decade after, when she retired to Providence to be near the Meeting, Jeanne remained active in the community as a weekly worshipper, member of the Board of Overseers at the Moses Brown School, and participant in the anti-war and social justice work of American Friends Service Committee. After moving to Kendal in 2011 she continued to attend weekly Meeting for Worship there and stayed in touch with Friends in Providence through letters, visits and avid readership of *The Provident Friend*. A pillar of our Providence Friends community, Jeanne is very much missed.

Jeanne's sons are planning a celebration of her life with a Zoom memorial on Saturday, January 15, 2022 starting at noon EST (9:00 am on the West Coast and 6:00 pm (18h) in France and Germany.) Mark will send out a Zoom link a week or so ahead of time. In the meantime, please send me notice of your intention to attend, so that I may forward to him your email. I will be compiling all the RSVPs and sending them in one batch email to Mark. You will then get the link for the Memorial Celebration directly. My email is [rleuchak@gmail.com](mailto:rleuchak@gmail.com).

Note that if you wish to attend, you must send me a message so that you can get the link. I will need your reply by the end of this month (December). If you have already let me know, your response has been noted with thanks and you do not need to respond a second time.



**Love Thy Neighbor**  
*from Dan Lederer*

Last month I received the following email:

*Across the outer wall of the Quaker Meeting House here in Providence hangs a large banner proclaiming, "Love Thy Neighbor (No Exceptions)" That's a noble sentiment, but I'd love to hang a banner beneath it asking, "Including Trump Supporters & The Unvaccinated?" Somehow I don't think that question would go over well.*

The writer raises an interesting point: How can we love someone whose behavior we find objectionable? For me, the answer lies in the interpretation of the exhortation to "Love Thy Neighbor." I don't think we're being asked to have feelings of love for all persons regardless of their actions. In fact, we may find some folks difficult even to like, let alone love. The issue is not how we feel about others but rather how we treat them. To me, "Love Thy Neighbor" means treating everyone with loving kindness regardless of our feelings toward them. That's something we can all try to do.

**Quaker Voluntary Service**  
*from Christina Dunbar*

I am an alum of and recruiter for Quaker Voluntary Service (QVS) and am reaching out to Friends meetings because QVS would be a great opportunity for young adult friends or relatives of Friends in transition to practice Quaker values and deepen their spirituality. Quaker Voluntary Service (QVS) applications are open for the 2022-2023 Fellowship year, and I would be very grateful if you could share the below blurb with our Friends community!

*"Grounded in the Quaker faith tradition and open to people of all backgrounds, QVS is a year-long Fellowship program in which young adults (age 21-30) build intentional community, work full time at social service and social change agencies, and explore themes of spiritual and personal growth with local Quakers.*

*QVS addresses racial, economic, and gender justice by helping partner organizations increase capacity to fulfill their missions and provide young adults with invaluable experience and training that equips them for a lifetime of social change work. QVS currently has houses in Atlanta, Boston, Minneapolis, Philadelphia, and Portland OR.*

*Applications for the upcoming 2022-2023 year (beginning in late August 2022) are due February 28, 2022."*

Read more and apply: Check out QVS' website, where you'll find a Fellow [job description](#), Fellow [testimonials](#), current service [partners](#), and the application [portal](#).

If you have any questions please feel free to email me: [christinad@quakervoluntaryservice.org](mailto:christinad@quakervoluntaryservice.org)

**Clerk's Corner: Where Are Our Dreams Today?**

*from Vicky Ekk*

This month's queries:

- Do I listen for Spirit even when the words are foreign to me? Is my own understanding of God enriched by other people's experiences of the Divine? (F&P 2014)
- To whom or to what am I accountable? F&P 2014)
- Do I uphold the right of all persons to justice and dignity? (F&P 1985)

As usual, time just flies, whether you are having fun or not! Here we are in December already, soon to transition to 2022! Remember thinking that the 2020's were so far in the future? Did you wonder what our world would look like at that time? Would we have flying cars? Would we have a world at peace and be out exploring other galaxies? Would we have conquered poverty, erased crime, and recognized all people as equals? Would we have cured the common cold, cancer, and heart disease and easily live to be over 100 years old?

When we look at the world at the brink of 2022, we know life has changed, but we are far from having achieved many of those dreams. What has humanity focused on to cause the actual changes we are experiencing? Are all the changes useful and beneficial? What worthy goals are before us now and how would we achieve them?

It's frustrating to look at what humanity has not achieved. It's even more frustrating to look at news that points out that the opposite of our dreams is happening every day. Frustration can lead to the quicksand of depression or inaction.

As Quakers, we are called to see that of God in everyone, even those who frustrate us. The only way to achieve this goal is to seek that of God in ourselves, to listen to the Inner Teacher, the guiding Light, the Spirit within. That can seem difficult during busy times (when are we not busy these days?). But we need to find it for our own peace and sanity.

George Fox, in *Truth of the Heart*, said ..." [T]he Light of God is inside you and you are the temples of God, and God has said he will make his home in you and walk with you. These things you must all find inside, there is your peace and there comes refreshment to your souls..." (p. 13) Quaker elder Susan Davies speaking to Winthrop Monthly Meeting earlier this month said, "The faith and practice of Friends perceives and lives as if there is always awaiting us the potential for Divine-human relationship. It is activated when we attune our whole being inwardly to perceive the

sound of the voice of our Inward Teacher, by whatever name you may call it.”

That voice within us refreshes and guides us to do what we each individually can to move our world out of darkness into the light, to correct the wrong and build the good. That voice is who I am accountable to. To whom or to what are you accountable?

### **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

Presiding Clerk: **Vicky Ekk** [clerk@providencefriends.org](mailto:clerk@providencefriends.org)  
Newsletter: **Jen McFadden and Dan Lederer** [providentfriend@providencefriends.org](mailto:providentfriend@providencefriends.org)  
Website: **Sam Schifman** [webclerk@providencefriends.org](mailto:webclerk@providencefriends.org)  
Questions and Information: **Steve Schwartz** [info@providencefriends.org](mailto:info@providencefriends.org)

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

**Current activities are listed  
on the Calendar on page 1.**

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Newsletter of  
Providence Monthly Meeting of  
the  
Religious Society of Friends  
99 Morris Avenue  
Providence, RI 02906