

The Provident FRIEND

April 12, 2022

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

Providence Monthly Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business 10th of Fourth Month, 2022 Minutes

Friends gathered by Zoom technology at 12:15 with 15 present. Presiding clerk Victoria Ekk began the period of silent worship by reading the following queries taken from Philadelphia Yearly Meeting's *Faith and Practice*, Queries on Nurturing Community:

Do we help each other to live with integrity and contribute that integrity to the life of our meeting?

How does our meeting learn of members' needs and offer its assistance?

How does our meeting nurture members in all stages of life?

The clerk read the following announcements:

- First Day School is holding walking classes outdoors on the first and third Sundays of each month this spring. For information, contact Wendy Virgadamo or Eugenia Marks.
- We are looking to reopen the Nursery for our young families and are seeking nursery assistants over the age of 18 to help support parents in watching children from ages 1-4 on Sundays.
- We will have a worship sharing about Meeting for Worship formats on Sunday, May 1, immediately following our combined Meeting for Worship so that both in person and online participants can participate.

The following items were brought forward:

Coffee Hour. Eugenia Marks reported that coffee hour will resume next week. Weather permitting, Friends will take their refreshments outside for socializing.

Concerning the group, "**Neighborhood Convening for Healing and Mutual Support**," Victoria Ekk reported that plans are being made for an outdoor social event to be held in Billy Taylor Park and involving people from the East Side/ Mt. Hope area. Marcus Mitchell is leading the effort.

Peace and Social Action Committee Report. The Committee brought information about a march being organized by the Poor People's Campaign; the march will take place in Washington, D. C. on

CALENDAR

Sunday, April 17, 10:00 AM, Meeting for Worship (Indoors and Zoom)

Sunday, April 17, 11:15 AM, Return to Coffee Hour (Indoors)

Sunday, April 24, 10:00 AM, Meeting for Worship (Indoors and Zoom)

Sunday, May 1, 10:00 AM, Meeting for Worship (Indoors and Zoom)

Sunday, May 1, 10:00 AM, Worship Sharing Regarding Meeting for Worship (Indoors and Zoom)

Sunday, May 8, 10:00 AM, Meeting for Worship (Indoors and Zoom)

Sunday, May 8, 12:15 PM, Meeting for Business (Zoom)

18 Sixth month 2022. Information will be sent out on the listserve, and interested Friends may also contact Steve Schwartz. The Committee also reported that a possible silent vigil supporting the United Nations Treaty in Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons may take place at the R.I. State House at a time to be determined.

Letter for Rebecca Leuchak. The Clerk brought a letter of introduction and travel for Rebecca Leuchak. As rising Clerk of New England Yearly Meeting, Rebecca will be visiting many monthly and quarterly meetings during the coming months. The letter is attached.

Nominating Committee. Dan Lederer brought the Committee's list of proposed committee memberships for the coming fiscal year. The Nursery was discussed, Friends noting that we currently have only two people on the Nursery Committee and no staff. Several methods of staffing the nursery have been tried over the years. Eugenia Marks stated that the Religious Education Committee has begun looking for people to work in the nursery. Friends approved the list.

Endorsement letter proposed. Peace and Social Action Committee proposed that our Meeting send a letter to members of the R.I. Senate and House of Representatives, with copies to Rhode Island's federal Senators and Representatives, endorsing R. I. House Bill 2022-H7518 and pending companion Senate bill, regarding efforts to prevent nuclear war, and also that we inform New England Yearly Meeting of our actions. We approve, and direct our Clerk to write suitable letters.

No further business appearing, we closed with a period of silent worship at 1:15 p.m., intending to meet next on the 8th of Fifth month.

Respectfully submitted,

Victoria Ekk, Clerk
Rebecca Smith, Recording Clerk

Addendum: Letter of Support for Rebecca Leuchak

April 10, 2022

To All Monthly Meetings and Worship Groups in New England,

We are pleased to provide a letter of introduction for Rebecca Leuchak, a member of Providence Monthly Meeting and rising Presiding Clerk for New England Yearly Meeting (NEYM) who will be traveling to visit monthly meetings and worship groups under the care of NEYM during 2022 and beyond.

Rebecca has been an active and joyful member of our Meeting and served as Presiding Clerk through August 2021. She is also taking up service as Presiding Clerk for NEYM, succeeding Bruce Neumann beginning in August 2022.

Rebecca Leuchak brings many gifts to NEYM. She is a strong and faithful Quaker with a growing understanding of the diversity of Friends' Meetings and beliefs. She brings her experience and knowledge about the challenges brought to our communities, including those during this time of COVID pandemic. She has a positive but realistic attitude to working with differing points of view, ways of being, and sees that of God within each living being.

Rebecca has extensive knowledge about working with young people and recognizes the importance of art, music and culture in our life and worship. She excels as an organizer who encourages others to listen for the Spirit and follow their own path to make our world a more just, welcoming and joyful place. She has led many projects, working groups and committees through more than 30 years of work in Providence and New England Yearly Meeting. She is clearly excited about meeting with Friends throughout New England to listen and to learn more deeply the ways that the Spirit is alive among us as she prepares for her service as Presiding Clerk.

We ask that you welcome Rebecca Leuchak, who brings with her our community's love and care for you. We look forward to getting to know you better through her and hope we can make a stronger bridge of friendship from Providence to all of NEYM.

In Joy, Victoria B. Ekk, Providence Monthly Meeting Presiding Clerk

Return to Coffee Hour on April 17

Thanks to those of you who volunteered to help out Hospitality Committee as we look forward to having coffee hour together beginning April 17 and continuing every First Day from then on. We still need a few more volunteers to make sure it happens. If you are wanting to see coffee hour resume and are willing to help, contact Dan Lederer (dlederer1@verizon.net).

Worship Sharing Regarding Meeting for Worship May 1

from Ministry and Counsel

On Sunday May 1, Ministry and Counsel Committee will be sponsoring a worship sharing to address the following query:

In our efforts to adapt to the COVID pandemic, Meeting has offered a variety of worship experiences, these being indoors with restrictions (vaccination, masks, social distancing), outdoors, online, and "hybrid". While many Friends have found one or more of these types of worship to be spiritually satisfying, others have not. The public health situation seems to be improving but there is no guarantee it will continue to do so. How then should we proceed?

May 1 is a day when we have a combined, or hybrid, Meeting for Worship, i.e., Friends who are meeting online are able to see and hear Friends in the Providence meetinghouse, and those of us who are in the meetinghouse can hear those who are online. Discussion of the above query will take place immediately after Meeting for

Worship and will include both the in-person and the online Friends. Our presiding clerk will moderate and will initially give each person in attendance the opportunity to speak, after which there will be a more open discussion. We had a similar online gathering on March 8 to try to reconcile the Quaker peace testimony with the conflict in Ukraine, and it was quite interesting and enlightening. This discussion promises to be the same.

In the process of preparing the annual State of the Society report, Ministry and Counsel recently asked for input from Friends, many of whom expressed their leadings regarding the topic of Meeting for Worship, and the committee has noted these comments. If you can't attend on May 1, you're invited to add your written response to the above query by emailing it to Dan Lederer (dlederer1@verizon.net) or Vicky Ekk (victoria.ekk@gmail.com).

Memorial Service for Al Dahlberg June 26

A memorial service for Meeting member Al Dahlberg will be held on Sunday June 26 at 2:00 PM in the Manning Chapel on the Brown campus. The memorial will be in the manner of Friends. There will a reception at the Hope Club following.

Message from Ukraine

This message was posted by anti-violence trainers at Alternatives to Violence (AVP) Ukraine, dated April 6:

It is very painful to absorb everything that is going on. It is hard to restrain one's emotions, while hearing the testimony of witnesses or looking at the photographs, photographs of people who have been killed, photographs of towns that have been destroyed. Yet, still, we bear in mind that within us is the Transforming Power. This is the Power which enables us to transform hot anger into inspiration, despair into help for those around us, horror into love for those near to us, rage into readiness to set to work. Now, as never before, we need each other. And this means that we are called to stand faithful, to stay emotionally in equilibrium.

Stop for a moment, take a pause. You will find, either within yourself or without, a lever,

which enables us to shift all the force out of hatred and into making peace. This is us — we are the peacemakers. Creators of peace, defenders of the light.

Helping Ukraine

Friends have provided the names and contact information for trustworthy organizations assisting the people of Ukraine through their current crisis. There may be a way for many of us to help both people and animals!

World Central

Kitchen <https://donate.wck.org/give/396273/#!/donation/checkout>

The Europe and Middle East Section of Friends World Committee for Consultation

<https://fwccemes.org/news/quaker-attention-on-peace-and-ukraine>
and

<https://fwccemes.org/news/quaker-support-for-ukraine>

Doctors Without Borders

https://www.ecosia.org/search?q=doctors+without+borders+ukraine&tts=st_a_saf_macos

International Rescue Committee

<https://www.rescue.org/topic/ukraine-crisis>

Animal Welfare Institute

<https://awionline.org/press-releases/awi-fundraises-animals-impacted-war-ukraine>

International Fund for Animal Welfare

<https://www.ifaw.org/news/emergency-aid-ukraine?ms=UONDF220320020&cid=7013k000001a9KH>

Humane Society International <https://www.hsi.org/issues/aid-for-animals-ukraine/>

Meeting for Worship During COVID: In-Person Worship Continues

Friends are continuing to gather for 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, with the Zoom link sent to our Providence Monthly Meeting members and attenders via email on Fridays and Saturdays.

First Day School

First Day School continues to provide packets for families to work with their children, and the 10 years and older group holds discussion with Wendy Virgadamo and guests two Sundays a month. Walking Sunday continues on the first and third Sundays of the month to give students a chance to meet in person.

Clerk's Corner: Responding Rather Than Reacting

from Vicky Ekk

April showers are real and sometimes it is true that when it rains, it pours! How often have all of us had to deal with several crises at the same time? That seems to be the way this month has started, not just in Providence, but around the world. There is a contrast between the hope spring brings to our hearts and minds and the reality of constraints, challenges and unhappy surprises that have also come to life at this time.

Have you ever found yourself making quicker decisions because so many are needed? That mix of happy/sad, hopeful/doubtful feelings brought about by the stresses of making multiple decisions at once is often what gets me to slow down and seek guidance more earnestly. A good Friend and I were chatting today about the difference between reaction and response. Reaction comes when something happens and my feelings rise up to meet the situation, but sometimes, the feelings take over and that's not always a good thing. Response happens when I take time

to wait, be silent and seek the Teacher within me. Very often, responding rather than reacting to a situation is the wiser path to take.

How often do I seek guidance so I can respond rather than react? Is it only for the “important” things? I am told that Sweetwater Nannauck, of the Tlingit tribe in Washington, prays before she answers each phone call, seeking guidance for every decision. I believe that is what George Fox and John Woolman modeled for us, the importance of slowing down and seeking guidance in that peaceful silence that is so dear to us as Friends! Centering myself in that Light, the love and wisdom that comes from it, enables me to respond and seek the good even in the midst of unexpected challenges.

So, lots is going on in April as we: reopen coffee hour, one step at a time, on April 17; find a way to reopen our nursery so young families can join us in worship; work on plans to build relationships and support neighbors in the Mt. Hope area; foster kinship with the Pokanoket and Narraganset tribes; have rich and deep sharing on Meeting for Worship formats; find a way to organize groups to set up more apartments for the likelihood of additional refugees coming to Providence; provide Alternative to Violence workshops to a variety of relevant groups in our area, and so much more! But more importantly, and more simply, let’s take time to constantly listen for the inward Teacher to lead us towards growing spiritually and be able to “walk cheerfully over the earth answering that of God in everyone.” (George Fox)

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@providencelfriends.org
Newsletter: **Jen McFadden and Dan Lederer** providentfriend@providencelfriends.org
Website: **Sam Schifman** webclerk@providencelfriends.org
Questions and Information: **Steve Schwartz** info@providencelfriends.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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the
Religious Society of Friends
99 Morris Avenue
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