

The Provident FRIEND

May 12, 2022

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

Providence Monthly Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business 8th of Fifth Month, 2022 Minutes

Friends gathered via Zoom technology at 12:15 with 13 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 Deepening our Faith: section on Meeting for Business:

- *Is our meeting for business held in worship in which we seek divine guidance?*
- *How do we sustain prayerful consideration of all aspects of an issue and address difficult problems with a search for truth that is unhurried by the pressures of time?*
- *Do I remain open to personal transformation as the community arrives at the sense of the meeting?*

The clerk read announcements concerning the life of the meeting. The following items of business were brought forward:

1. Concerning the "Neighborhood Convening for Healing and Mutual Support," Victoria reported that the group is developing methods of communication among people in the area and plans to work on learning what needs exist.
2. Our member Betsy Cazden, currently assistant clerk of Friends World Committee for Consultation, plans travel to Paris for the annual meeting of the Europe and Middle East Section. We have prepared a Letter of Introduction (attached) for her and ask Friends to hold her and the European situation in the Light.
3. For Ministry and Counsel Committee, Dan Lederer brought a request to add Mike Hirtle to the Committee beginning June 1. Friends approved.
4. Ministry and Counsel Committee brought forward a memorial minute for our Friend Al Dahlberg (attached). Friends approved.
5. For Ministry and Counsel Committee, Sam Schifman brought the attached report on the State of

CALENDAR

Sunday, May 15, 10:00 AM,
Meeting for Worship (Indoors and Zoom)

Sunday, May 22, 10:00 AM,
Meeting for Worship (Indoors and Zoom)

Sunday, May 29, 10:00 AM,
Meeting for Worship (Indoors and Zoom)

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

Sunday, June 5, 11:30 AM, First
Day School Picnic (outdoors)

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

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

Saturday, June 18, Poor People's
Campaign March on Washington

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

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

Sunday, June 26, 2:00 PM,
Memorial Service for Al Dahlberg,
Manning Chapel, Brown University
Campus

our Society in 2021. Friends approved.

6. For Ministry and Counsel and Providence Meetinghouse Management Committees, Dan Lederer brought the following proposal concerning the formats to be used for Meeting for Worship: *Meeting for Worship will continue in the Providence meetinghouse with the requirements of proof of full vaccination, mask wearing, and social distancing. Weather permitting, Friends may choose to worship outdoors informally. Online worship will continue at the same time, with combined in-person and online worship taking place every other week. This format will be re-visited at Meeting for Business no later than September 2022.* Friends approved.

7. Peace and Social Action Committee has proposed that our Meeting communicate with the City Council of Providence through the organization Back from the Brink by endorsing the following statement regarding U. S. Government policy on nuclear weapons: **actively pursuing a verifiable agreement among nuclear armed states to eliminate their nuclear arsenals; *renouncing the option of using nuclear weapons first; *ending the sole, unchecked authority of any US president to launch a nuclear attack; *taking US nuclear weapons off hair-trigger alert; and *canceling the plan to replace the entire US nuclear arsenal with enhanced weapons.** Friends approved. The Committee also suggested that the Meeting become a partner of the Back from the Brink group; after discussion, Friends did not have unity to take that step.

No further business appearing, we closed with a period of silent worship at 1:30 p.m., intending to meet next on the 12th of Sixth month.

Respectfully submitted,

Victoria Ekk, Clerk
Rebecca Smith, Recording Clerk

To see the Letter of Introduction for Betsy Cazden, the Al Dahlberg Memorial Minute, and the 2021 State of the Society report, go to
<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1QA2-0IGtLVmYrM0UasfKQxtD30ms8lfg?usp=sharing>

First Day School Picnic Sunday June 5

from Religious Education Committee

Along with Hospitality Committee, First Day School will be sponsoring an end-of-year picnic on June 5 (rain date June 12). We are still not cleared for general pot-luck but will provide individual servings as possible. We will have grilled meat and plant-based foods. Your ideas within these safety limits are welcomed.

Also, First Day School asks you to donate a Sunday morning of fun with our youngsters outdoors during June, July, and August. Your creative ideas for playing with children are needed -- musical, painterly, crafts, games, etc. Contact Religious Education Committee co-clerk Eugenia Marks (emarks66@gmail.com).

Continuing through May, First Day School will be providing 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.

We are looking forward to opening the nursery to all members for children age 4 and younger beginning soon. This will be a cooperative project, with Meeting providing one adult and parents on a rotating basis providing the second adult.

Poor People's Campaign March on Washington June 18

Our Peace and Social Action Committee (P&SA) is informing our meeting community to please consider participating in the march and getting others to do so. The two key requests are to join the march and to help with outreach by becoming a "Mobilizing Captain"

"The Poor People's Campaign: A National Call For Moral Revival" was started around 2017 as a continuation of the 1960's Civil Rights movement that marched on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. On Saturday, June 18, 2022, they are holding a nationwide March on Washington to address these interlocking injustices:

- Systemic racism
- Systemic poverty
- Ecological devastation and the denial of healthcare
- Militarism and the war economy
- The false moral narrative of religious nationalism

They are particularly looking for Mobilizing Captains to help inform organizations and networks and bring friends and families as part of the delegation from Rhode Island. Pamela Poniatowski, the state campaign chairman for the Poor People's Campaign, spoke at a recent P&SA meeting. She is scheduling events and Zoom meetings to spread the word to as many people as possible, and is happy to talk with anyone who can help. P&SA is asking our meeting and community members to participate in getting as many people as possible to join the march.

There is already a method for reserving a bus seat, and there is a lot of information that would be helpful to learn from in order to speak with friends and neighbors about joining. That information is at the links below. It is best to contact Pamela (401-288-1583 or pamelarichponii@gmail.com), and you can also contact Steve Schwartz of the P&SA Committee (401-439-7281 or steve@absteve.com).

To buy a bus ticket to the march on subsidized buses go to <https://rally.co/poor-peoples-assembly>

To register as a Mobilizing Captain fill out the RSVP form at <https://www.poorpeoplescampaign.org/june18/#rsvp>

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.

Exhibit at Moses Brown School

Friends are invited to an exhibit currently on view at Moses Brown School, "Witness My Hand, Moses Brown", which gives a glimpse at the long history of this Quaker School, originally founded in 1784. Artifacts drawn from the School's rich archives include the personal belongings and writings of Moses Brown himself, as well as wonderful collections of student mementos, eighteenth and nineteenth century teaching materials, and vintage photographic records. Located in Middle House, access to the exhibit is via the main entrance to the school. The exhibit is open now and for the foreseeable future, with no end date at this point. Contact the curator, Rebecca Leuchak (rleuchak@gmail.com), for more information.

Worship Sharing About Our Worship Format

On May 1, 2022, Friends gathered in worship sharing on Zoom and at the Providence Meetinghouse, to consider 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?

To view Friends' comments expressed at the Worship Sharing, as well as those submitted in writing, go to <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1IkBidQ0GPmNI-e3Sr3AiGojTuUc2Q4nY/view?usp=sharing>

Message from Pastoral Care Committee

Pastoral Care makes sure that Friends are cared for. An older Friend needs a friendly visit at the Anchor Bay senior community in East Providence. Another Friend is hoping for visits at Rhode Island Hospital after surgery. If you'd like to give a bit of your time for these gifts of love, please contact Pastoral Care Clerk Zona Douthit (zona.c.douthit@gmail.com).

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.

Are You Car-Light?

from Val Reishuk

As automobile-owning Ocean Staters continue to pay high prices for gasoline, there are more incentives than ever before to be car-light or car-free. Friends have an historical affinity for travel on foot, going back to England and Wales. Modern Quakers look for green travel solutions, often opting to live where they work and to work where they live.

Whether the place one calls home is one of Rhode Island's quaint villages, or tailored suburbs, or our very own capital city, one can take some baby steps to driving less--especially to driving less in single-occupant vehicles. When I started my journey to car-free, I chose those walkable and bikeable errands that I could do around town. One-sack grocery trips. Mailing a small package. Walking to the Avon Theater for a matinee. Here on Providence's East Side, I meet parents who have purchased/modified bicycles which are capable of toting along small passengers plus a few grocery sacks. Senior citizens (like me!) travel on RIPTA buses or RIPTA RIDE special needs transit. And everybody rides those motorized scooters.

Climate scientists have determined that these short, car-free, upstream trips have an outsized effect on traffic congestion downstream. That seems erroneous! If one stays in one's own community to run an errand, why would it matter if one walks or bikes or takes the bus or drives to that errand? Well, apparently, one less car on the road has an effect locally...and further down the roadway. Your car-light decision matters. A lot. Especially for greenhouse gas emissions.

The RI House of Representatives is currently proposing to fund two major improvement projects for bicycle and transit travel in the Ocean State. I've seen the plans, and this could mean that your not-so-walkable suburb might get a lot better! Bond issues could be on the ballot by November 2022.

I look forward to seeing all of you soon – at the Meeting House or on Zoom – and hearing about your car-light experiences.

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Clerk's Corner: May is for Community

from Vicky Ekk

May is such a busy month! We begin with May Day, which in Europe turns out to be Workers' Day and for many Americans marks the real beginning of spring. And did you know that May 4 is Rhode Island's Independence Day? Then those of us who have Mexican antecedents or, like my family, enjoyed living on the west coast celebrate Cinco de Mayo with tostadas and

salsa. And, of course there is Mother's Day, reminding us that it's important to thank those who labored to bring us into the world. Memorial Day ends the month by taking a long weekend to remember and celebrate those who have passed away and served their country in many ways.

What makes human beings want to stop and take a day to celebrate people or events? We Friends believe that every day and every event is sacred, so we tend to downplay the concept of holidays or holy days. But there is another way to look at this tendency to celebrate; it helps us to remember the many ways our life is made brighter by people and happenings around us. Perhaps we should look at these 'special' days as if they were that string tied around our finger so that we can remember to be grateful for the Light brought to us by people and events. It is important to affirm that which is reflective of the Light within. The gifts given to us that we use to do and speak what is right and just need to be affirmed. The work that people do, the caring that is shown, when recognized encourages the rest of us to reflect and be open to our own spiritual growth.

I am personally grateful for everyone in our PMM community with whom I have been in contact for the past seven years. I am aware of how much your words, your actions, and your hopes and dreams have influenced my own understanding of the Quaker testimonies as they are lived. Thank you for sharing what you've learned, sharing your struggles, showing your persistence when life challenges you. We all help each other grow. That is what community is all about.

This month, let's find out more about our community. Let's reach out to someone we haven't seen in a while. Let's use the example of nature as trees bud and leaves show their tender green to come out of our COVID slumber and rebuild community, in person, online, or whatever way works for you. Let's affirm our beliefs in the spirit within us and celebrate every day!

Presiding Clerk: **Vicky Ekk** clerk@providencefriends.org

Newsletter: **Jen McFadden and Dan Lederer** providentfriend@providencefriends.org

Website: **Sam Schifman** webclerk@providencefriends.org

Questions and Information: **Steve Schwartz** 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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Providence Monthly Meeting of
the
Religious Society of Friends
99 Morris Avenue
Providence, RI 02906