

PROVIDENCE FRIENDS MEETING HANDBOOK

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Providence Friends Meetinghouse

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PROVIDENCE FRIENDS MEETING

PRIVILEGES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Who We Are: Quaker Meeting is a group of members and attenders who gather together once a week on First Day (Sunday) for worship based on the principle of silent, direct communication with God. Our experience is that this communal worship serves to provide inspiration to continue our efforts to incorporate into our daily lives the Quaker testimonies of integrity, community, peace, simplicity, equality, and stewardship. There is no planned program but some may feel moved to share a spiritual message, bearing in mind our belief that there is that of God in everyone and therefore each person is deserving of caring and respect.

Meeting for Worship: All are welcome to participate in Meeting for Worship. Worshipers are encouraged to enter Meeting for Worship neither determined to speak nor determined not to speak, but rather open to the leadings of Spirit. Participants are asked to be mindful of the following: (a) If you must arrive after 10:00 AM, it is courteous to enter the meeting room at the prescribed time, this being 10:15, so as not to disturb the worship of others. (b) Unnecessary noise (e.g., candy wrappers, cell phones, watch chimes) can be distracting to others. (c) Messages can be difficult to hear, especially for those among us who have impaired hearing, so we urge the speaker to stand and deliver his or her message in a loud, clear voice. After all, if a message is worth sharing it's worth being heard. (d) In most cases, a lengthy message is not needed in order to make one's point. Brevity is appreciated. (e) The children return from First Day School at our usual closing time, 11:00 AM, so it is best in general to avoid messages that take us beyond that time.

Meeting for Business: Members and attenders have the opportunity, via Meeting for Business, to participate in decision-making for the Meeting community. Since decisions made at Meeting for Business take into account the input of members only to the extent that members participate, it is important that as many as possible attend. Whenever feasible during the period between Meeting for Worship and the start of Meeting for Business, the presiding clerk will make available any relevant written materials so that Friends can review them ahead of the meeting. Business is conducted in the manner of Friends, which is to say in the context of worship, so participants are asked to state their position on any given issue and then wait for the sense of the meeting to become manifest as guided by Spirit. A person who finds himself or herself to be not in unity with the clerk's interpretation of the sense of the meeting about a specific issue has several options: (a) to agree to stand aside, (b) to stand aside but ask to be recorded as opposed, or (c) to be unwilling to stand aside, in which case those present are asked to discern whether the person's concern is weighty enough to defer a decision on the matter at hand.

Committees: Members and attenders are encouraged to participate on committees. (Certain committees require membership, these being Ministry and Counsel, Finance, Marriage Clearness, Pastoral Care, Quaker Education Support, and Nominating). Since Meeting has no paid staff, all work is done by committees and therefore the life of the Meeting depends on active participation by all.

Clerking: Each committee selects a clerk and recording clerk early in the fiscal year, which begins June 1. The clerk's responsibilities include preparing an agenda and presiding at committee meetings, ensuring that Quaker process is followed by providing time for silent worship at the beginning and end of each meeting (as well as during a meeting as necessary), encouraging respectful listening, allowing each committee member to express his or her thoughts on any given topic, and, as discussion proceeds, trying to determine and then communicate the sense of the committee in regard to specific issues. The recording clerk writes up the minutes of each meeting and sends them to the clerk for review. After any necessary revisions, the clerk distributes the minutes to the other committee members and the Presiding Clerk and then decides which items should be reported to the Meeting as a whole.

Presiding Clerk: Ministry and Counsel recommends a candidate for Presiding Clerk of Providence Monthly Meeting to Nominating Committee, and Nominating Committee then presents the candidate to Meeting for Business for approval. The term of office for the Presiding Clerk will be three years, renewable for a second three-year term. His or her responsibilities include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following: Serves as clerk for Meetings for Worship with a Concern for Business and, with the assistance of the Recording Clerk, provides minutes of these meetings for the record and the newsletter; serves ex officio on Ministry and Counsel Committee and attends other committee meetings at his or her discretion; appoints Nominating Committee on a yearly basis; receives and responds to all written and verbal communications to Meeting including letters applying for membership and marriage; assists in arrangements for memorial services; represents Meeting to outside organizations and serves as Meeting's legal representative, signing legal documents as required; conducts worship sharing sessions around various topics arising in the life of the Meeting or as suggested by NEYM, including the yearly State of the Society report; oversees communications with NEYM such as the attendance report; serves as Meeting's representative to Quarterly Meeting; and serves as the contact person for any members or attenders having concerns relating to the life of the Meeting, directing them to the appropriate persons or committees.

Assistant Presiding Clerk: The Assistant Presiding Clerk serves as clerk for Meetings for Worship with a Concern for Business at such times as the Presiding Clerk is unavailable. The Assistant Presiding Clerk may also substitute, upon the clerk's request, at any committee meetings the Presiding Clerk feels would benefit from her or his attendance (particularly those of Ministry and Counsel). In addition, the Assistant Presiding Clerk advises the Presiding Clerk when the latter requests assistance in discernment of an issue or event within the life of the meeting. The decision to nominate someone for the position of Assistant Presiding Clerk is left to the discretion of Ministry and Counsel, in consultation with the Presiding Clerk with whom the assistant would serve, and appointment is by Meeting for Business. It is recommended that the past Presiding Clerk serve in this capacity for at least one year immediately following the end of service in the clerkship. An Assistant Clerk will be sought when it becomes clear that the present Presiding Clerk may be nearing the end of a time of service in that capacity. At times when there is no sitting Assistant Presiding Clerk, the Presiding Clerk is encouraged to approach the clerk of Ministry and Counsel to fulfill the duties enumerated above.

Presiding Clerk Transition: When the transition of Presiding Clerks begins, Ministry and Counsel will form an Ad Hoc Presiding Clerk Transition Committee. This committee will identify, and present to Ministry and Counsel for approval, an Assistant Presiding Clerk who will,

at a later date, become the Presiding Clerk. Once approved by Ministry and Counsel, the nominee for Assistant Presiding Clerk will also require the approval of Meeting for Business. After a suitable interval, as determined by the ad hoc committee, the committee will recommend to Ministry and Counsel that the Assistant Presiding Clerk assume the role of Presiding Clerk. If approved, this recommendation will also be brought to Meeting for Business for approval. Once approved by Meeting for Business, the new Presiding Clerk will take on the responsibilities of that role, while the outgoing Presiding Clerk will serve as Assistant Presiding Clerk for at least the following year.

Membership Recorder: The membership recorder is responsible for keeping track of the membership statistics throughout the year, and reporting any changes annually to Providence Monthly Meeting for Business, the Quarterly Meeting, and the New England Yearly Meeting. This includes tabulating weekly attendance at Meetings for Worship, gathering data on new members, and notifying the Meeting of any deaths, transfers, and resignations, as well as recommending any discontinuances for inactive members. In order to facilitate these duties, it is recommended that the membership recorder set up a file folder each year, with an updated Member Attendance form, Members list, and Year of Birth Chart. These are worksheets to help in organizing the data. In addition, it is recommended that the membership clerk make every effort to ensure that the contact information is up to date for every member. The official data for current members is kept in a blue binder, with a sheet for each individual member. Discontinued member sheets are kept in a black binder. Very old forms have been sent to the Rhode Island Historical Society, to the Quaker archivist. Both the blue and the black binders are kept in an ancient basket which has been handed down from membership clerk to membership clerk. The basket also contains the yearly statistical reports from past years. Conanicut and Saylesville members are included as Providence members.

Communications: Members and attenders may communicate with Meeting as a whole via a variety of means including announcements at the rise of Meeting for Worship (which we ask to be submitted in writing ahead of time), written material on Meeting bulletin boards, notices in the monthly newsletter, and postings on the Quaker electronic mailing list. In all cases, the content of the communication should be of general interest to Friends and must be in a form that reflects goodwill toward and respect for each person in our community. Concerns about the activities of individuals or committees are more appropriately made privately rather than via these avenues of general communication. Any questions about the appropriateness of a message can be referred in advance to the Presiding Clerk.

Quaker electronic mailing list: Any member of this email group will receive all postings and may post messages that will be received by everyone else in the group. No editing is done, so it is left to the individual's judgment to determine whether a message will be of interest to Friends. Links to websites are acceptable in the text of a message, but the list's standard settings do not allow attachments. If an attachment is essential to a message, and the person sending it is confident about its origin, the message with attachment can be sent to the list moderator at list@providencefriends.org; the moderator can then send the message out with the attachment.

Financial Contributions: The Treasurer presents information regarding the status of the annual budget at each monthly Meeting for Business but members may have access to this information at any time. Realizing that there is a wide variation in the ability of members to contribute

monetarily, and that many of us contribute to the life of the Meeting in non-monetary ways, it is still important to remember that the Meeting's operations depend on the financial support of its members. Contributions in support of the Meeting can be given directly to the treasurer, placed in the donations box near the front entry, or mailed to the treasurer at the address noted on the donations box (rather than to the Meeting House address as mail received there is sometimes lost or delayed). The Meeting can also accept gifts of appreciated stock; one may contact either the treasurer or the clerk of the Finance Committee to set this up. Donors also may contact the treasurer at treasurer@providencefriends.org.

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

Communications Committee's goal is to enhance communication among Meeting members and attenders as well as between Meeting and the outside community. Its area of responsibility includes the newsletter, the electronic mailing list, the directory, the handbook, advertisements and announcements, brochures, and the Meeting website. No one on the committee is expected to have comprehensive knowledge in all these areas. Rather, individual members of the committee have a variety of specific talents and skills which they bring to bear on the committee's activities. The committee meets on a regular basis at the discretion of the clerk.

Communications Committee is also responsible for maintaining the Meeting Archives, a digital repository of past and current information including the composition of committees, the Meeting Handbook, our demographic database, minutes of committee meetings, minutes of Meetings for Business, treasurer's reports, newsletters, State of the Society reports, contracts, and grants. The digital documents are stored on a password-protected storage site that can be accessed by the committee clerk, his/her designees on the committee, and the Presiding Clerk. Some of this information is posted for general access on the Meeting website (<http://providencefriends.org/>) at the committee's discretion. Demographic information is provided to individuals only on an as-needed basis and is otherwise kept confidential. Meeting members and attenders may request information or documents from the committee clerk or his/her designee(s). Any concerns about the appropriateness of a request will be referred to the committee as a whole and, if necessary, to Ministry and Counsel. Committee clerks are asked to assist in keeping the Archives current by forwarding all minutes and other generated documents to archivist@providencefriends.org.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Finance Committee meets monthly from September through June. It monitors the handling of moneys and the accounting system used by the Treasurer (recording and reporting of all receipts, expenditures, funds on hand, deposits in checking and savings accounts, and investments). All Committee members must be members of the Meeting. The Treasurer is an ex-officio member of the Committee but is not its clerk. On a quarterly basis, the Treasurer reports to Meeting for Business on the status of the budget.

"Funds" are book records of moneys to be used for various purposes. No attempt is made to keep them separated in the various bank and investment accounts. Contributions from members and attenders go into the General Fund and are used for operating expenses and activities of the Meeting as designated by the annual operating budget. Designated funds have specific purposes

and are administered by specific committees. That portion of any designated fund that is considered endowment cannot be spent.

On its own initiative, or on request, the Committee makes recommendations to the Meeting concerning the condition of the General Fund, the need for increased giving by the membership, or the rate of expenditure for various purposes. The Committee may appeal directly to the membership for contributions as it sees fit. From time to time the Committee may evaluate the long-range financial needs of the Meeting and report any concerns to the Meeting for Business.

Beginning in December, the Committee solicits budget requests from all committees for the upcoming fiscal year that begins June 1. At the March Meeting for Business the Committee presents a preliminary operating budget proposal that anticipates the needs for expenditures as expressed by the various committees. The Committee presents a final budget proposal for approval at the April Meeting for Business.

As soon as the Treasurer completes the fiscal year's accounting, the Committee asks the Meeting's appointed auditors to look at the records. When the auditors are satisfied that the records agree with Meeting policies, they report to Monthly Meeting for Business. (See Appendix page 14 for yearly schedule of work.)

FUNERAL & BURIAL GROUNDS COMMITTEE

Funerals

Friends who are interested in a funeral or memorial service held after the manner of Friends are encouraged to pre-plan their funeral to ensure that their wishes are accommodated and to relieve the decision-making from the bereaved. These arrangements can be made by working directly with a funeral director (of your choice) or by completing a prearranged funeral form available through the Funeral & Burial Grounds Committee. Members of the committee can provide pertinent information about what needs to be included in these arrangements.

When the death of a Meeting member or regular attender occurs, the responsibilities of Providence Monthly Meeting of Friend are shared between Ministry & Counsel and the Funerals and Burial Grounds Committee. The Clerk of this committee will give a copy of the pamphlet "The Conduct of Funerals for Friends" to the bereaved and keep a supply of the pamphlets in the library. If the family wants a programmed meeting in the Meeting House, Ministry and Counsel must be consulted first. Such a meeting must adhere to basic principles of a Friends' Meeting for Worship. When not held in the Meeting House, all arrangements connected with the service are usually made by the family and the funeral director. (See Appendix for further details)

Burial Grounds

Another responsibility of the committee is the administration of the Burial Grounds in the care of the Providence Monthly Meeting. Subject to the rules and direction adopted by the Monthly Meeting from time to time, the Committee is authorized to deal with all matters in relation to the administration of the Burial Grounds. These rules apply to the Friends Section of North Burial

Ground in Providence, Saylesville Burial Ground (both the Friends Section and the Arnold Section), and Cumberland Burial Ground. Committee members will provide details specific to these burial grounds on request (see Appendix).

HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE

This committee serves as host for Meeting functions to see that they run smoothly and are enjoyed by all. The general responsibilities of the committee are as follows:

The fellowship hour after Meeting for Worship is an important part of this committee's job. The committee maintains a sign-up sheet in the fellowship hall to share this responsibility with members and attenders. One member of the committee serves as Coordinator each month and should ask members and attenders to serve as hosts. A "How – To for Coffee Hour Hosts" is provided.

Coordinators of the committee also ask members and attenders to serve as greeters. A "How-To for Greeters" is provided.

The Holiday Gathering is a Cooperative effort of the Meeting as a whole, but the committee is responsible for the organization of the supper, setting up the tables, preparation of coffee, and cleaning up.

Buying supplies for the kitchen is the responsibility of this committee. (Paper towels and toilet paper are bought by the Property Committee.)

Keeping the kitchen clean is the responsibility of the committee. Bi-annual clean-up days are co-sponsored with the Property Committee.

Luncheons for Quarterly and Yearly Meetings, when hosted by the Providence Meeting, are the responsibility of Ad Hoc Committees established for each such meeting.

See Appendix (pages 17-22) for specific responsibilities of the clerk, co-clerk, and members of the Hospitality Committee as well as "How-To for Coffee Hour Hosts" and "How-To for Greeters" hand-outs.

LIBRARY COMMITTEE

Library Committee is responsible for all books, pamphlets, periodicals, leaflets, and videos belonging to Meeting. It purchases books, pamphlets, and leaflets, and keeps up subscriptions including Quaker Life and Friends Journal. It catalogs new acquisitions, oversees loans, and, in consultation with Ministry and Counsel, decides which books can be discarded or stored for future research.

MINISTRY AND COUNSEL COMMITTEE

Composition

The committee should be composed of 12 seasoned members from Providence Monthly Meeting, with care that some of that number represent worshipers at Saylesville Preparative Meeting. Members are nominated for 3 years and may be asked to serve up to 3 more years. No one may serve on Ministry and Counsel for more than 6 consecutive years.

Members of Ministry and Counsel are chosen for this service to the community as serious, discreet, judicious, and experienced Friends. New members are approved by the current committee before being forwarded to Nominating Committee. Outgoing Clerks of the Meeting may be asked to serve on Ministry and Counsel. In addition, the Clerk of Providence Monthly Meeting and the Clerk of Saylesville Preparative Meeting are also members of this committee *ex officio*.

Specific Duties

The committee's main responsibility is the oversight and advancement of the spiritual development of the Meeting.

Ministry and Counsel is also responsible for:

- Caring for the overall health and strength of the Meeting. Included in this responsibility is an ongoing executive responsibility for the affairs of the Meeting.
- Being available to advise and counsel any member or attender on personal or spiritual matters and specifically on the faith and practice of the Society of Friends.
- Making all arrangements for Meeting for Worship. Ministry and Counsel members will rotate the responsibility for sitting on the facing bench and closing Meeting for Worship during the fall, winter, and spring months. July and August will be unscheduled, with members filling in as needed. Asking for announcements, for the introduction of visitors or returning worshipers, encouraging financial donations, and welcoming all to coffee hour are part of the facing bench responsibility at the rise of Meeting.
- Receiving and considering all membership applications and transfers and appointing a Clearness Committee from within Ministry and Counsel to meet with prospective members and with transfer members when appropriate. Upon the advice of that committee, recommending these names to Monthly Meeting for approval.
- Preparing the annual State of Society Report, which is presented to Monthly Meeting for approval.
- Assisting members or attenders in times of personal need in whatever way seems appropriate.
- Giving consideration to young adults, their membership, and their participation in the life of the Meeting.

Responsibilities

To respect and protect the confidences and trust of all matters brought before the committee.

- To maintain open communications with Pastoral Care Committee and keep it informed about matters before the committee.
- To recognize the importance of nourishing its members' own health and well being.

Other

- The Deborah Jenks Fund and the Ruth Arnold Kellam Fund are available to Ministry and Counsel for use without prior approval of Monthly Meeting.

MARRIAGE CLEARNESS COMMITTEE

Marriage Clearness Committee meets upon written request of members/attenders who wish their marriage to take place “under the care of the Meeting” or “in the manner of Friends” either in a meeting house or elsewhere. The request is sent to the Clerk of the Providence Monthly Meeting.

The committee may ask for a brief autobiography of both individuals to be distributed to committee members prior to the first meeting. At the meeting, committee members acquaint themselves, if necessary, with the couple and assure themselves of the validity of the request, meeting more than once if needed. If the Marriage Clearness Committee approves of the marriage, it so recommends this to Ministry and Counsel, which, if in agreement, makes the same recommendation to Meeting for Business. After consideration, if Meeting for Business approves, a committee of oversight is appointed by the clerk of the Monthly Meeting at the prior suggestion of the couple.

As of 1981, the State of Rhode Island has eliminated any definition of religious clergy. We, as the Society of Friends, are able to wed members or non-members (having a Rhode Island resident member of the Society sign the marriage certificate) as long as we approve of and oversee the marriage. The categories of “under the care of” and “in the manner of Friends” are non-legal terms relating solely to how closely the couple is involved with the meeting.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Presiding Clerk appoints the Nominating Committee early in the calendar year but no later than January 15. The committee usually consists of 4 or more members of Meeting with at least one member being reappointed from the previous year's committee. The Presiding Clerk names a clerk of the committee and provides the clerk with a copy of the Meeting Handbook.

Nominating Committee canvasses the clerks of other committees for suggestions as to possible committee members and solicits individual members and attenders for their preferences in committee work. In all nominations the committee obtains individual acceptance for office and committee assignment.

The committee presents a preliminary report of nominations at the April Monthly Meeting for Business and a final report in May. The final report indicates a convener for each committee in

anticipation of a clerk's being selected at each committee's first meeting in June. Membership on a committee requires approval by Meeting for Business. Additional nominations for committee membership may be presented at any time during the year.

The committee functions under the following guidelines:

- Officers of Monthly Meeting and representatives to NEYM and other outside organizations are nominated annually.
- Saylesville Preparative Meeting appoints its own Presiding Clerk and Recording Clerk.
- Committee appointments are for a 3-year term with one third of each committee named annually.
- There are two auditors for each year with one being a carry-over from the previous year.
- Ministry and Counsel will select one of its members to be our representative to NEYM Ministry and Counsel Committee.
- Service on Ministry and Counsel, Pastoral Care, and Finance is limited to two consecutive 3-year terms, after which there is a mandatory break of at least one year.

Only Meeting members may serve on Ministry and Counsel, Pastoral Care, Finance, Marriage Clearness, and Nominating Committees.

PASTORAL CARE COMMITTEE

COMPOSITION:

- A committee under the direction of Ministry and Counsel composed of members from Providence and Saylesville recognized for their gifts of spiritual support, leading, and insight.
- Ministry and Counsel shall determine the size of the committee taking into consideration the needs of the Meeting.
- Service on the committee by members shall not exceed two consecutive three year appointments.

FUNCTION:

- To complement the efforts of Ministry and Counsel in the areas of:
 - Supporting and assisting those in the Meeting with personal and/or spiritual matters.
 - Assisting members/attenders during times of crisis.
 - Listening deeply and being present to the needs of the meeting community.
 - Reaching out to those unable to attend or fully participate in the life of the meeting.
 - Addressing issues as directed by Ministry and Counsel on behalf of the Meeting.
 - Seeking assistance from various professional/outside organizations and individuals when appropriate.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

- To respect and protect the confidences and trust of all matters brought before the committee.
- To maintain open communications with Ministry and Counsel and keep it informed about matters before the committee.
- To recognize the importance of nourishing its members' own health and well being.

PEACE AND SOCIAL CONCERNS COMMITTEE

This committee has a twofold purpose:

First, it functions as a communications link between the Monthly Meeting, with its concern for peace and social welfare in the larger community growing out of our religious convictions, and the individuals and groups which share these concerns. This enables the Meeting to work with people in the community, translating concerns into action.

Second, it serves as a forum and clearing house for ideas concerning peace work and social service which originate within the Monthly Meeting.

In fulfilling these responsibilities, the primary activities of the committee are:

- Communication with other religious and service groups and with members of legislative bodies on issues with which we are concerned.
- Providing ongoing support and help in American Friends Service Committee and Friends Committee on National Legislation work.
- Education of Meeting members and attenders regarding community needs and social problems and issues concerning peace.
- Coordinating peace and service activities undertaken by the Meeting and allocating funds for peace and social concerns in the larger community. .

The committee meets once a month at the meetinghouse. The date and time are posted and announced. Any member or attender is welcome and encouraged to participate.

PROGRAM COMMITTEE

The Program Committee serves to support the Meeting Scheduler in determining whether activities requiring the use of the Meetinghouse are appropriate for the Meeting. The Committee maintains the documents for meetinghouse use and bears the responsibility for revising these documents as needed. The Committee also will serve as a support to anyone or any group within the Meeting wanting to initiate an activity for the Meeting.

PROPERTY COMMITTEE

Responsibilities

The Property Committee is charged with the care and upkeep of the buildings and grounds of Providence and Saylesville Meeting Houses. This includes:

- Yard care
- Sidewalks and parking
- Shoveling snow at the front entrance
- Building maintenance, outside and inside
- Purchase of equipment
- Cleaning and bathroom supplies
- Light bulbs and replacement of furnishings

Calendar

The Meeting Scheduler is responsible for keeping a calendar of events and meetings held in Providence Meetinghouse. All committee meetings and special events should be cleared ahead of time with the scheduler to avoid conflict in dates and hours. This is also the only way we can know who is using the building. Those in charge of weekday meetings are expected to see that the heat is turned down, lights are turned out, and doors are locked upon leaving.

Cleaning

The Moses Brown janitorial service cleans the meetinghouse during the week in the school calendar year. Recycling and food trash are usually taken away by whoever generates the trash. Members are requested to leave meeting rooms clean and in order after use for any reason.

Emergencies

In case of emergencies, a member of the Property Committee should be notified immediately. Breakdowns in equipment and needed repairs should be brought to the attention of the Committee.

(see Appendix pages 20-21 for Important Locations and Outside Services)

QUAKER EDUCATION SUPPORT COMMITTEE

The Scholarship Committee renamed itself in April of 2005 to become the Quaker Education Support Committee in order to better represent a mission which includes as much “outreach”

support of Quaker education programs as it does “in-reach” support for elementary and secondary aged children of members’ families who need financial help to be able to participate in such programs.

The Quaker Education Support Committee will continue to grant partial scholarships to active members’ families for Quaker tuition fees where such grants can make the difference in allowing their children to attend a Quaker school. In addition to these school scholarships, the committee maintains an open file and bulletin board to help friends be aware of other Quaker programs, conferences, and camps that may be of interest.

The Committee may choose to reserve approximately a quarter of its annual budget to support families’ participation in other Quaker programs such as Quaker camps or Quaker service trips. Our goal is to provide support when it makes the difference in the ability of active members’ families to participate in such programs.

Members of the meeting who would like to apply for a scholarship should write to the committee stating the names of their child or children and the Quaker school or program whose tuition needs to be supported. Specific granting levels will vary from year to year depending on need and availability.

Funds may be reserved in years of less need to be able to continue support in years of greater need. In addition to regular budgeted amounts, the meeting will accept special contributions designated for this committee.

Our hope is that most of the families who receive these scholarships will repay all or part sometime in the future so that the fund will be available to assist other families in need. Thus we encourage those families who have received assistance in the past to repay the scholarship fund according to their ability.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The Religious Education Committee provides for the care, spiritual nurture, and religious education of the children within the Meeting community. Through its First Day School classes and programs, the Committee provides a forum for children to explore, better understand, and express their Quakerism. The Committee works closely with other committees, such as Social & Hospitality, Ministry & Counsel, Library, and Property, to create a positive nurturing environment for the children. Parent involvement is strongly encouraged and can be very rewarding.

First Day School

First Day School classes and programs are offered weekly from 10:15 to 11:00 AM every Sunday during the academic year for children kindergarten aged through 8th grade. Programs for high school students vary depending on the level of interest. Children younger than 5 years old usually go to the nursery during meeting. At 10:15 First Day Students go downstairs with their teachers for their own meetings. The Religious Education committee is responsible for the

organization of these classes and programs, including curriculum development and the designation and selection of coordinators to oversee the teaching. It is the responsibility of the Committee to maintain a class roster summarizing the names of students who attend First Day School classes along with their parents' names and contact information. It is the responsibility of the committee to set both the time of weekly First Day School and the calendar for the year. Presently, the formal program for First Day School commences the First Day after Labor Day and concludes in early June. The decision whether or not to offer First Day School meetings during the summer is made by the Committee based on the needs and resources of the group active in the Religious Education Program. Based on current interest and participation, we offer an informal First Day School program in the summer.

(See Appendix pages 24-25 for Special Events and Curricular information)

ADULT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The Adult Religious Education Committee seeks to provide a variety of educational opportunities for adult members and attenders relating to basic Quakerism. Topics may include Quaker history, belief, and practice; the testimonies of simplicity, integrity, peace, equality, community, and stewardship; and other subjects of particular interest to Quakers. Programs will vary from year to year.

APPENDIX

Membership Recorder

Throughout Year:

- Count attendance at weekly Meeting for Worship (can use clicker).
- Enter onto Attendance form (can put on calendar and later onto form).
- Have any new members fill out Membership form (can call for info).
- Bring any discontinued members to Monthly Meeting for Business.
- Save all new and deleted member information in file for year.
- Save copies of all newsletters for end of year report.

Yearly Report

- 1.) Duplicate required forms for New England Yearly Meeting.
 - Duplicate Statistical Report form. Make several copies.
 - Duplicate Household form. Make several copies.
- 2.) Check in monthly newsletters for Monthly Business Meetings.
 - Make a list of all additions, with dates, and application or transfer.

- Make a list of all deletions, with dates, and death or resignation.
 - Save list until Statistical Report completed and sent.
 - 3.) Update Membership List on computer.
 - Delete all members who died or resigned during year.
 - Add all members who were added during year.
 - Check that Membership List agrees with entries in Blue Book.
 - 4.) Update Year of Birth form:
 - Delete all members who have been discontinued during year.
 - Add all members who have become members during year.
 - Amend Year of Birth form to designate ages 0-14, 15-18, 19-25, 65+.
 - 5.) Make out new Household form for new members.
 - Put aside to send with Statistical Report to Yearly Meeting (YM),
 - 6.) Update Attendance form for Average Attendance.
 - If not in already, put all attendance onto Attendance form.
 - Add numbers. Divide by number of days recorded.
 - 7.) Fill out all categories on Statistical Report form in pencil.
 - Use Membership form, Year of Birth form, and Attendance form.
 - Call for needed information from Saylesville and Conanicut.
 - Check to see that all numbers add up correctly.
 - Write the correct numbers in ink.
 - Make 3 copies.
 - Send one to Yearly Meeting, one to Quarterly Meeting.
 - Present one at Monthly Business Meeting
 - Keep original on file.
 - 8.) Update Blue and Black books.
 - Add all new members to Blue Book, alphabetically by last name.
 - Add all discontinued members to Black Book, alphabetically.
- Send letters to inactive non-resident members every 3rd year. (2015)
 - Send letters to inactive resident members every 3rd year. (2016)
 - Send letters to adult juniors reminding to join as adult members every 3rd year. (2017)

FINANCE COMMITTEE

CALENDAR

September:	General discussion
October:	Distribute budgets to committee clerks
November:	Send out appeal letter
December:	Solicit budget requests from committee clerks
January:	Collect above; prepare “wish list” budget
February:	Report any issues to Meeting for Business
March:	Present preliminary budget to Meeting for Business
April:	Present completed budget proposal to Meeting for Business
May:	Revise budget as necessary
June:	Review end-of-year report; identify issues for coming year

GUIDELINES FOR GRANT APPLICATIONS

1. All grant applications for meeting activities and projects shall come through a standing committee and be presented to Meeting for Business for its consideration.
2. Approved grant applications must be signed by the Providence Monthly Meeting's clerk or designee.

GUIDELINES FOR CONTRACTS

1. Routine or periodic contracts (i.e. servicing the boiler, exterminator, etc.) within the committee's budget may be signed by the clerk of the initiating committee, up to a maximum of \$10,000. Amounts above \$10,000 require the signature of the Presiding Clerk.
2. All contracts not covered by the initiating committee's existing budget (and therefore requiring additional funding) must be approved by Meeting for Business.
3. All contracts over \$1000 shall have a written contract and shall be reviewed by the Finance Committee. The initiating committee, as part of its due diligence, is responsible for seeing that service providers have appropriate insurance for liability and workers' compensation.
4. Non-routine /non-periodic contracts for more than \$ 1,000 shall be presented by the initiating committee at a Business Meeting for the information of the membership. At the discretion of the clerk of Providence MM and/or on recommendation of the Finance Committee, the business meeting may be asked to give formal approval. Change orders or addenda shall go through the same procedure.
5. Except for routine expenditures described above, all contracts committing meeting funds shall be signed by the presiding clerk of the meeting or his/her designee.
6. In a bona fide emergency, the responsible committee may take emergency action to protect life and property, and shall consult with the presiding clerk and the clerk of the Finance Committee as soon as feasible.

HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE

I. Responsibilities of CLERK:

1. **Call Hospitality Committee meetings:**
 - a. Set times for meetings approximately every other month.
 - b. Call all committee members about meeting times.
 - c. Ask members if there are any agenda items. Set meeting agenda.
 - d. Clerk the Meetings.
 - e. Appoint a recording clerk for each meeting.

- f. Delegate committee members to help with Holiday Gathering.
- g. Attend Monthly Meeting for Business to give committee reports and to seek the sense of the Meeting on committee recommendations.

2. Divide the labor for coffee hour and greeter:

- a. Ensure that each committee member is responsible for coordinating one of the twelve months of the year.
- b. If there are not twelve active members of the committee, recommend additional members to the Nominating Committee or, if it is not in session, to the Monthly Meeting for Business.

3. Miscellaneous Secretarial Tasks:

- a. Keep track of minutes and proceedings of the committee to pass on to the next clerk. Maintain the Hospitality Committee Notebooks (Current and History).
- b. Write occasional brief items for the newsletter keeping the Meeting community updated on the work of the committee.
- c. Print out monthly sign up sheets for coffee hour and greeter.
- d. Make sure that there is a ready supply of handouts on instructions for coffee hour, greeter, and potluck.
- e. Solicit ideas from committee members no later than February for State of Society Report due by March 1st. Write and submit report.

4. Holiday Gathering:

- a. Coordinate with Religious Education Committee in mid-October to find a date for the Holiday Gathering. Decide who will decorate.
- b. At November meeting, delegate Holiday Gathering responsibilities.
- c. Post a sign-up sheet for potluck items and number of people attending a month in advance.

5. Meeting Work Days:

- a. Coordinate semi-annual clean-up days with Property Committee in Spring and Fall
- b. Post sign-up sheet for clean-up day tasks.

II. Responsibilities of CO-CLERK:

- 1. Purchase staples for hospitality.**

- a. Coordinate purchase of coffee from Equal Exchange.
 - b. Take and keep an inventory of supplies so that you know what's available and what's running low.
 - c. Purchase sugar, salt, pepper, artificial sweetener, creamer, powdered drinks, teas, juices, peanut butter, cream cheese, crackers, cookies, packaged soup, and snack items from cost-effective vendor (e.g., BJ's or Sam's Club).
 - d. Purchase paper plates, cups, bowls, and napkins from cost-effective vendor (e.g., Maral Sales and Paper Co., 25 Slater Rd., Cranston, RI, Phone 401-463-7300).
 - e. Be sure to give vendors our Tax Exempt #498.
 - f. Submit receipts for supplies to Treasurer for reimbursement.
2. **Meeting work days:**
- a. Make sure that there are light refreshments available.
 - b. Submit receipts for reimbursement.
3. **Holiday Gathering:**
- a. Make sure there are enough staple foods and paper goods.
 - b. Buy more supplies as needed. Submit receipts for reimbursement.
4. **Quarterly and Yearly Meetings hosted by Providence:**
- a. Make sure enough supplies are on hand.
 - b. Buy more supplies as needed. Submit receipts for reimbursement.
5. **Weddings:**
- a. Ensure that there are enough supplies.
 - b. Buy more supplies as needed. Submit receipts for reimbursement.
6. **Memorial Services:**
- a. Ensure that there are enough supplies.
 - b. Buy more supplies as needed. Submit receipts for reimbursement.

There is a large punch bowl and tea service in cupboard on third floor.

III. Responsibilities of MEMBERS:

1. **Serve as Coordinator for one month of the year:**

- α. Ensure that there is a greeter for each First Day.
- β. Ensure that there is a host for coffee hour for each First Day.
- χ. Ensure that there are two people for set-up and clean-up for the potluck.
- δ. Arrive early each First Day of your assigned month to ensure that coffee and snacks are put out and that there is a greeter.
- ε. Ensure that soup is prepared on Business Meeting days.
- φ. Stop in the kitchen before and during potluck and coffee hour to offer encouragement and to be available to answer any questions.
- γ. Ensure that newcomers are greeted at coffee hour.
- η. Ensure that the kitchen and fellowship are clean and the door is locked after coffee hours and potluck.

2. Provide hospitality for the annual Holiday Gathering as delegated by Clerk:

- a. Purchase special food items unique to the Holiday Gathering (e.g., cider).
- b. Set up tables and chairs for the potluck. One plan for set up is in the Hospitality Book. Another is in the cupboard above the stove.
- c. Set tables for the potluck.
- d. Create centerpieces for the tables if assigned to Hospitality.
- e. Coordinate the flow of food in and out of the kitchen.
- f. Assist in clean up after the potluck.
- g. Take tablecloths home to be laundered and return to bins.

3. Assist in Clean-Up of the Meeting House:

Assist in Fall and Spring clean-ups, paying particular attention to the kitchen.

4. Assist with hospitality in special events as delegated by Clerk:

- a. Assist with weddings.
- b. Assist with memorial services.
- c. Assist with Quarterly and Yearly Meetings when held in Providence.

IV. Responsibilities of RECORDING CLERK:

- 1. Take minutes during committee meetings.
- 2. Type up the minutes.
- 3. Submit copies to the Clerk of the Hospitality Committee and the Clerk of the Monthly Meeting.

“HOW-TO” FOR COFFEE HOUR HOST

Purchase Ahead of Time:

Coffee Hour – Keep it simple and easy to do. You should check the refrigerator ahead of time (the First Day previous to your “shift” is a good idea) to see if we need milk or half & half for coffee. Purchase if needed. Purchase donuts or bagels, etc. if you can. If not, we have supplies of crackers, cookies and peanut butter in the kitchen.

Potluck – Bring a gallon of milk, a gallon of juice (check refrigerator the week before, if you can, to see what may be on hand), bread or rolls, butter or margarine, and potluck dish of your choice (optional).

Save your receipts if you wish to be reimbursed and turn these in to the Hospitality Committee clerk.

Coffee and Tea Preparation:

Arrive ½ hour early to start coffee and hot water. Cabinets and are labeled so that you can easily find supplies. Instructions are posted over the kitchen counter to the right of the sink. Coffee supplies are in cabinet above the counter. There are several urns. Use one for coffee and one for hot water.

Plug only one appliance into the outlet on the serving counter. (The plug is marked with this message as well.)

On Serving Counter and Serving Table:

On serving counter, set out coffee urns, mugs, milk or half & half for coffee, sugar and sugar substitutes in bowls, stirrers, spoons, tins and boxes of tea bags, paper cups, for juice, drink containers.

On serving table, set out food, plates, napkins and utensils (as needed).

Cleanup:

Leftover food, open packages – Scrape all vegetable waste into compost container. Throw away other food scraps and paper. There are canisters, food storage bags, and plastic wrap for storing leftovers. Make sure that cookies and crackers that are opened are stored so that they won’t get stale. Decide whether or not any items to be refrigerated will keep another week, and if not, then send these home with someone or toss out. Please mark stored items with the date they were opened. Pen and labels are in the kitchen.

Dishes and utensils – Wash, dry, and put away. If possible, take dishcloths and towels home to launder, or if not possible, hang to dry.

Floor – Check for dropped food, crumbs, and spills. Sweep or mop as appropriate.

Closing up – Secure trash. Make sure back door is locked. Turn off lights.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP!

If you have any questions, please feel free to ask the Hospitality Coordinator for the month (listed on the sign up sheet), or ask any Hospitality Committee member.

“HOW-TO” FOR GREETER

Greeters serve more than a ceremonial role. By their presence they offer a friendly welcome to familiar Friends and a resource for newcomers and visitors. In both respects, they are an important part of the social and hospitality function.

Responsibilities are basic, but important:

- Arrive in time to begin greeting at 9:45 a.m.
- Greet worshipers and welcome them.
- Introduce yourself to newcomers.
- Hand newcomers a copy of the Welcome brochure if available. If not, explain how we worship, or direct newcomers' attention to the pamphlets that explain our way of worship.
- Mention to newcomers with children that child care is available in the nursery, and/or that First Day School is offered to older children September through June.
- Respond to immediate questions.
- Close the door to the Meeting Room at 10:00 a.m.
- Greet latecomers and direct them to the library so that all can go into the Meeting Room together, with less distraction for worshipers.
- Invite latecomers to enter the Meeting Room at 10:15 a.m.

PROPERTY COMMITTEE

Important Locations:

The **Water Meter** and **Main Shut-off** are situated in the book closet in the downstairs hall.
Furnace Emergency Shut-off Switch: To the left of the boiler room door as one enters; **ON is up position; OFF is the down position**

Electric Fuse Boxes are also in the wall of the boiler room to the left.

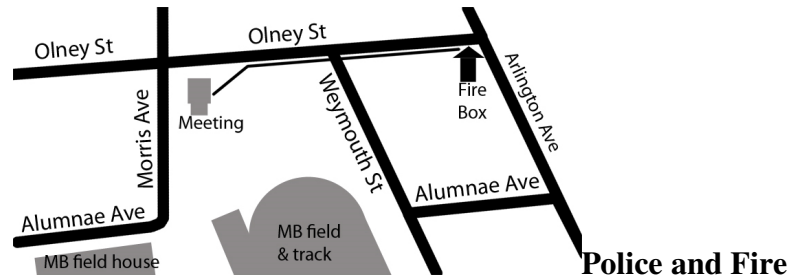
Circuit Breaker Boxes are located in the upstairs and downstairs halls.

Fire Extinguishers:- there are five:

The permanent locations have not yet been determined.

NEAREST FIRE CALL BOX

CORNER OF OLNEY & ARLINGTON STREETS (Out the back door and down the hill.)



- For emergencies call **911**
- For business or inquiries call **401-272-1111**

Keys

So many members have keys to the Providence Meeting House, the need for personal responsibility and stewardship of the building is obvious. Key holders are asked not to have duplicates made.

Outside services we currently use:

Fire Extinguishers -- Fesco, Inc., 704 Central Ave., Pawtucket, Phone 723-4300.

Heating Fuel

Providence Meeting House

New England Gas Company: Customer Service & Emergency Service --(401) 831-8800

Saylesville Meeting House

New England Gas Company: Customer Service & Emergency Service --(401) 831-8800

Insurance -- Shove Insurance, Inc., 100 East Ave., Pawtucket, Phone 722-1185, Agent is George Stevens.

Paper Goods -- Maral Sales and Paper Co., 555 Valley St., Providence, Phone 421-7644.

Plumbing -- Sine Plumbing and Heating Co., Inc., 13 Alexander Ave., East Providence, Phone 434-6436

Roofing:**Saylesville Meeting House**

Heritage Improvements; 17 Franconia Drive, North Smithfield, RI 02830; 401-356-4080. (New GAF roofing system with architectural style asphalt shingles installed June 2005. 50 year warranty, Lifetime at 20%)

The Meeting is exempt from **Rhode Island Sales Tax**. Our tax exemption is **No. 498**. Please use this number when making cash purchases for the Meeting.

Religious Education Committee

Special Events

Fall and Spring Plantings

The Religious Education Committee plans and oversees the fall and spring planting events each year with the children of the First Day School and interested members of the wider Meeting community.

Christmas Program

In conjunction with the Social and Hospitality Committee, the Religious Education Committee plans the annual Christmas Program for the Meeting. It is the responsibility of the Committee to organize and host the program carol singing and “entertainment”, which typically involves as many of the children of the First Day School as possible. The Religious Education Committee also assumes responsibility for decorating the Meeting for Worship room in a simple manner to make for a festive Christmas program.

First Day School Teacher Appreciation

The Religious Education Committee offers an annual Teacher Appreciation recognition to honor and thank the teachers of the First Day School, including members of the Religious Education Committee as well as members of the wider Meeting community who have taught and contributed to the First Day School throughout the year. Typically, the Teacher Appreciation recognition includes the reading of each person’s name who has contributed to the First Day School and, perhaps, the bestowing of a simple card and/or gift by the children. The event has generally been held at the rise of Meeting for Worship on the last day of First Day School classes for the year.

Picnic

The Religious Education Committee organizes the Meeting picnic, which is typically held in early fall. The picnic may be held at the home of a member, a public or private venue, or at the Meeting House depending on availability. The picnic is typically a potluck affair complete with

games and outdoor activities.

Curricular Materials and Supplies

Curricular materials and supplies for First Day School classes and programs are stored in the large cupboard in the large basement social room. Catalogued junior books are selected, purchased, and stored in cooperation with the Library Committee.

Budget

It is the responsibility of the Religious Education Committee to submit a budget for curricular materials and program supplies to the Treasurer.

Reducing the Risk of Sexual Misconduct in Providence Monthly Meeting

Religious organizations have been the targets of sexual predators because there often is a low level of suspicion of such activities in these settings. Accusations of sexual misconduct, regardless of whether they are justified, can be devastating to any organization, and even the appearance of impropriety can be damaging. In our Meeting, areas of vulnerability include, but are not limited to, religious education, the nursery, pastoral care, and clearness committees. The following suggestions are intended to reduce the risk of any such incidents in our Meeting:

What is Sexual Misconduct?

For the purpose of these guidelines, the term *sexual misconduct* encompasses a range of unacceptable adult behaviors including sexual abuse (physical contact by an adult directed at a minor or vulnerable adult for the purpose of sexual gratification), sexual exploitation (for example, taking advantage of a counseling situation, taking of inappropriate photos), and sexual harassment (for example, unwelcome sexual advances, vulgar comments or humor, sexually suggestive messages).

Guidelines and Procedures

- Meeting representatives for religious education, pastoral care, clearness committees, and nursery activities will be members or attenders for a minimum of six months and will be familiar with these guidelines. Any contract babysitters in the nursery will be thoroughly checked, including contact with references.
- Any activities involving children will take place in groups, in a space that allows observation by others and with at least two supervisors present at all times. Parents will be welcome to attend at any time.
- Children will stay with the organized activity and will not have unsupervised access to the meetinghouse.

- Clearness committees and ad hoc committees formed to address specific concerns of a member or attender will always include two or more persons.
- Anyone concerned about possible sexual misconduct, or about the risk of such misconduct's occurring, will report this immediately to the Presiding Clerk and the clerk of Ministry & Counsel. Any verified incident of sexual misconduct must be reported to the appropriate authorities, as required by law, and to the Meeting's insurance carrier.
- Any discussion of possible sexual misconduct with the person accused of such will take place in the presence of at least one witness.

Reporting Suspected Child Abuse

On rare occasion, an adult in our meeting community may have reason to suspect that a child in the Meeting is being abused (physically, sexually, or otherwise) at home or elsewhere outside the meetinghouse.

In Rhode Island, *any* person who knows or reasonably suspects that a child is being abused and/or neglected is required to report his or her suspicions to the Department of Children, Youth, and Families within 24 hours of becoming aware of the abuse/neglect. DCYF will then undertake a screening investigation. Reports can be made anonymously, and people making good faith reports can't be sued for doing so. The statute, RIGL 40-11-3, also states that people who knew of the abuse/neglect and failed to report it can be charged with either criminal or civil penalties. There is no exception in the reporting statute for religious communities or "clergy," or for information gained in conversations that might be considered "confessional." The Meeting takes seriously its legal, as well as moral, obligation to protect our children.

The reporting law is focused on abuse of a child (anyone under age 18) by someone responsible for the child's care, such as a parent, another adult, a child in the home, a teacher, or a day care worker. It does not encompass bullying by an unrelated child or assault by another teen or adult. It also applies only to children who live in, or were abused in, Rhode Island. (See below for Massachusetts.)

What constitutes "reasonable suspicion" of abuse/neglect? Basically, any physical or emotional trauma for which there is no reasonable explanation, or any pattern of facts and circumstances, based upon as accurate and reliable information as possible, that would lead a reasonable person to suspect that a child is abused or neglected. Experts list the following as symptoms or behavior that may signal abuse:

- insufficiently explained bruises, welts, abrasions, burns, or fractures;
- reports of injury made by the child;
- behaviors such as fear of returning home, fear of parents, or fear of contact with adults;
- lack of control of aggressive or self-destructive impulses;
- habit disorders such as biting, rocking, or hair pulling;
- consistent hunger, poor hygiene, inappropriate dress;

- unattended physical or medical needs;
- explicit reports or stories by the child of a sexual nature;
- torn, stained, or bloody underclothing;
- bruises or bleeding in the genital area.

Any one or two of these signs does not necessarily indicate abuse. But if several of these signs are present, or there is a recurring pattern of these signs, a prudent person should suspect abuse. If you are not sure, please check in with a member of the Meeting's Pastoral Care, Religious Education, or Ministry and Counsel committees, as others may have observations that supplement or explain yours. Time for discernment should not, however, significantly delay reporting to DCYF.

How to report: The Rhode Island Department for Children, Youth and Families has a 24-hour Child Abuse Hotline, 1-800-742-4453.

A note about Massachusetts: Massachusetts does not have an "any person" reporting mandate. People required to report suspected child abuse include "Clergy," including "ordained or licensed" religious leaders and people performing "official duties" on behalf of a church or employed on a regular basis to supervise or teach children. It is unclear whether anyone in our meeting fits that definition. "Mandated reporters" also have to file a written report on a form available at www.mass.gov/dcf. On the other hand, others are permitted (though not required) to report suspected abuse, and we may encounter a situation where it would be prudent to do so, to protect a child. When you suspect that a child from Massachusetts is being abused or neglected, you should immediately telephone the DCF Area Office serving the child's residence and ask for the Protective Screening Unit. A directory of offices can be found at www.mass.gov/dcf. Offices are staffed between 9 am and 5 pm weekdays. To make a report at any other time, call the Child-At-Risk Hotline at 1-800-792-5200.

Nominating Committee

These notes describe procedures that have been helpful in the recent past. We offer them in hopes that they may help future clerks find their way.

Duties of the clerk, any of which could be assigned to an assistant clerk:

1. Draw up a list from last year's notes of people who should **not be contacted** for committee work. These include elderly Friends, long inactive Friends, and those who have requested not to be contacted.
2. **Obtain current copies** of the Meeting Directory, Meeting Handbook, and current committee assignments, being prepared to give copies to all committee members after the do-not-call names have been crossed out.
3. **Contact clerks of all committees** except Ministry and Counsel for advice and recommendations for new members of their respective committees.
4. Prepare copies of **form letters** for committee members to mail out to Friends on their list for whom there is no phone. If the clerk provides a set of **return address** labels with the clerk's name, all the return-to-sender envelopes will come back to the clerk so that wrong addresses can be duly noted and reported in April to the Clerk of the Communications Committee.

5. Have a fresh **Excel worksheet** with last year's columns moved over to the left. This allows for a blank column on the right for new 3-year committee assignments. The farthest left column includes the names of committee members who may choose to stay on the committee for another three years or who may choose to step down. As the committee contact work moves along, the names on this fourth column will disappear as new names fill in on the first column.
6. Convene a meeting of all committee members in late **January or February** to explain procedures and tentatively assign pages of names in the directory for committee members to call. Saylesville Friends are assigned to the member of the committee from Saylesville regardless of the page numbers of the names.
9. This **introductory meeting** should also review basic committee requirement as well as awareness of which committees are in particular need of help.

Ministry and Counsel selects its own committee members as well as those for **Pastoral Care**, so it is not the job of the Nominating Committee to make these assignments. We may, however, inform the Clerk of Ministry and Counsel if a Friend expresses particular interest in being considered for Ministry and Counsel or for Pastoral Care.

Finance, Marriage Clearness, and Quaker Education Support are only open to Members of the Meeting.

All other committees are open to both attenders and Members of the Meeting: **Funeral and Burial Grounds, Program, Property, Social and Hospitality, Religious Education, Adult Religious Education, Library, Peace and Social Concerns, and Communications.**

7. Accumulate an alphabetic listing of any new names acquired in the nominating process (including addresses, names of appropriate family members, phone numbers and emails). To minimize the efforts of the clerk of the Communications Committee, the same list could include requests for deletions to the Meeting's contact list. All should be **reported in April**.

Duties of all Nominating Committee members

1. At the first meeting, committee members should look over their assigned pages of names and **trade among themselves** when they discover names they wish were on their list or names that would be more comfortable for another member to call.
2. Calls or face-to-face connections at Meeting should be attempted as **soon** as is convenient so that the clerk will be able to submit nominations to the April business meeting.
3. Before contacting Friends on an assigned list, committee members should make note of any **present committee assignments** and whether or not they are due to **roll over** in the current year. Note should also be made of any given name that is listed for a job at the top or the bottom of the Nominating Worksheet. Calls to these people could include the question of whether they will be able to continue with that job. If they cannot, the Clerk of the Meeting should be consulted for advice on filling these positions.
4. As members accumulate responses, these should be **reported to the clerk** so that additions and correction can be made in the Excel worksheet, and needs may be noted before time is tight.
5. Members should also keep the clerk informed of notes to pass along to the Clerk of the Communications Committee regarding Friends' requests to be removed from the Meeting's contact list or regarding contact detail **changes** they have discovered.

Meetinghouse Use

1) Types of activities that we will accept: We generally encourage activities that are in keeping with Friends' testimonies. We welcome the use of the Meetinghouse for weddings and funerals by members and attenders of our Meeting and other Friends. Use for weddings and funerals by others will be granted on a case by case basis. We reaffirm that weddings will generally be under the care of our Meeting, under the care of another Meeting, or under our joint care. Which Meeting will assume responsibility for appointing Committees of Clearness and Oversight will be made clear at the outset.

2) Role of Scheduler: Application for use of the building will initially be made through the Meeting House Scheduler. In the case of Quaker groups, permission will, in general, be granted automatically, subject to scheduling availability. In the case of multiple requests for a given time period, priority will be given to requests from a member of Providence Meeting or from other Quaker groups. If there is uncertainty as to whether a requested activity is appropriate, the Scheduler will refer the question to the Program Committee and any other committee that, in the opinion of the scheduler, may lend guidance to the issue. A for-profit group and a non-profit group requesting a periodic use of the meetinghouse will generally be required to sign a contract and fulfill the requirements specified therein.

3) Use by the Moses Brown Community: The meetinghouse is the place of worship for the Moses Brown community, and as a result many alumni, faculty, and staff have found a spiritual connection to the Meetinghouse. In recognition of the unique relationship between Moses Brown School and Providence Monthly Meeting, the Meetinghouse can be made available for the use of Moses Brown community members for events such as memorial services or weddings. The Director of Friends Education at Moses Brown School will be the contact person for the school, working with the meetinghouse scheduler to ensure that the expectations for care of the meetinghouse are met, including but not limited to maintenance of the facility for these events.

4) Responsibilities of the liaison person monitoring any given activity: All groups that are from outside the Meeting shall have a specific person from the Meeting who will function as their liaison. The liaison should be familiar with the building use guidelines and be sure the building is used appropriately and respectfully. To ensure that the plans and expectations are understood by everyone, it is important for the user group and their liaison to be in contact prior to the group's arrival.

The liaison's role includes clearing the use of the meetinghouse with the Scheduler, educating user groups as to our guidelines, familiarizing the user group with our facilities, and locating needed items. The liaison must be on site to open the building at the time of arrival, welcome users, and answer any questions. The liaison must be on call during the entire time of use and have contact cell phone numbers of persons in charge of the user group.

The liaison must check the building at the end of the use to be sure that lights, stoves, and water faucets are off, trash has been removed, windows are closed, furniture is in proper placement, dishes are clean, small appliances are unplugged, food placed in the refrigerator has been removed, and the keys have been returned.

5) Restrictions on groups using the meetinghouses: To preserve the Meetinghouse as a place of worship, we specifically request that the following guidelines be followed:

- a) No food or drink other than water is permitted in the Meeting Room.
- b) Alcohol is prohibited and may not be consumed while on or using our facilities.
- c) Meeting for Worship is fragrance free.
- d) Cell phones must be turned off during Meeting for Worship.
- e) No smoking in any part of the building.
- f) No photography or video-photography during Meeting for Worship (including weddings).
- g) Do not use or move the piano unless specific permission has been granted.
- h) The kitchen may be used for warming prepared food or making small meals. Special permission will be required for larger cooking efforts.
- i) Please be sure everything is cleaned up and put in its place when you leave.
- j) Recyclable materials free of food particles and grease should be placed in the blue bin; floors should be swept with broom located in the furnace room; tables should be wiped clean.

6) Suggested Donations: We welcome donations to the Meetinghouse that are appropriate to the size and scope of its use to offset the cost of maintaining the building. Considerations in making a donation include winter heating, use of the kitchen, cleaning, and general maintenance. The customary donation is \$50 - \$500.

FUNERAL & BURIAL GROUNDS COMMITTEE

The conduct of Funerals for Friends

To quote from *The New England Yearly Meeting Faith and Practice*

“...The family should arrange for the disposal of the body in accordance with legal requirements and the wishes of the deceased. In such matters, Friends should practice simplicity and avoid display of excessive expense...”

“A Meeting for Worship is the proper form for a memorial service or funeral. Ministry and Counsel or a special committee should oversee all arrangements. The Monthly Meeting should consider writing a memorial minute.”

The Meeting for Worship on the occasion of a funeral or memorial service held after the manner of Friends may be held at the Meeting House or any convenient, suitable place.

Advanced Planning

Friends are encouraged to pre-plan their funeral to ensure that their wishes are accommodated and to relieve the decision-making from the bereaved. These arrangements can be made by

working directly with a funeral director (of your choice) or by completing a prearranged funeral form available through the Funeral & Burial Grounds Committee.

Pertinent information to be included in these arrangements includes:

1. The funeral director you desire.
2. Method of disposal for your remains
3. Donation of your organs and tissues to the New England Council on Organ Donations.
4. Burial.
5. Cremation.
6. Type of casket/urn.
7. Location of burial or ashes scattering.
8. Purchase of burial plot (as applicable).
9. Type of service.
10. Contributions in lieu of flowers.

Assistance Available at the Time of Death

A REPUTABLE FUNERAL DIRECTOR WILL:

1. Obtain the death certificate from the doctor and file the death with the State Registrar of Births and Deaths.
2. Obtain permits for the transfer and disposal of the body.
3. In case of cremation:
 - i. Transport the body to the crematorium.
 - ii. Deliver the ashes to the family or deliver them to the cemetery for the burial.
4. In the case of burial:
 - i. Embalm the body if the family so desires. The law requires that the body must be buried within 24 hours after death if it is not embalmed. The medical examiner can require that a body be embalmed.
 - ii. Transport the body to the graveside and/or place of worship.
5. Provide the casket, urn or carton.
6. Place notices in the newspaper.
7. Arrange with the cemetery superintendent for the burial.
8. Make available the use of the funeral director's establishment.
9. Transport the family to the place of worship and/or graveside.
10. Answer any specific question, i.e. burials in other states.

MINIMUM COSTS FOR FUNERAL DIRECTOR SERVICES (by law a funeral director must itemize a bill into three areas: professional service, automotive use and facilities.)

Services

Casket

Vault for casket

Vault for urn instead of carton
Transportation to funeral director's establishment
Transportation to place of worship
Transportation to graveside
Transportation to crematorium
Cash advances (i.e. newspaper notices, certificates)
Facilities for wake or services
Cremation at Swan Point Crematorium
Cremation at Moshassuck Crematorium
Cremation with use of chapel
Opening and closing of the grave
Artificial greens to cover the mechanism.

Support available from Providence Monthly Meeting

The responsibilities of Providence Monthly Meeting of Friends, when the death of a Meeting member or regular attender occurs, are shared between the committee for Ministry & Counsel and the Committee for Funerals and Burial Grounds.

1. The Funeral and Burial Grounds Committee should always have at least one member of Ministry and Counsel in its membership. The clerk of Ministry and Counsel should always be notified of a death so that the two committees can work together as a given situation warrants.
2. The members of the Funeral and Burial Grounds Committee will express a feeling of affection and concern to the family of the deceased and offer to help in any way.
3. The Clerk of this committee will give a copy of the pamphlet "The Conduct of Funerals for Friends" to the bereaved and keep a supply of the pamphlets in the library.

To quote from *The New England Yearly Meeting Faith and Practice*

"...The family should arrange for the disposal of the body in accordance with legal requirements and the wishes of the deceased. In such matters, Friends should practice simplicity and avoid display of excessive expense... The Monthly Meeting should consider writing a memorial minute."

4. Committee members will be available to the family to make arrangements for the use of the Meeting House for the service and for Friends' oversight, if desired.
5. The Clerk of this committee will provide the deed for burial plots in North Burial Ground and Saylesville Burial Ground. (See attached form letter.)
6. The committee will have a list of funeral directors in various communities and the approximate cost of burials and cremations.
7. At the time of death, the committee will form a plan for notifying members of the local meeting, and, if indicated, other meetings, of the death.

8. A member of the committee should be ready, if asked, to make a brief explanation at the start of the service of Friends' form of worship or to delegate this function to a member of meeting.
9. If the family wants a programmed meeting in the Meeting House, Ministry and Counsel must be consulted first. It must adhere to basic principles of a Friends' Meeting for Worship. When not held in a Meeting House, all arrangements connected with the service are usually made by the family and the funeral director.
10. Members of the committee should be present in the Meeting House one half hour before the service to place flowers which may have been delivered and to greet and seat attenders.

At the graveside freedom of vocal expression should prevail. The handshake is a fitting culmination at the service or the gravesite.

Rules Governing Operation of Burial Grounds

Under Care of Providence Monthly Meeting

The administration of the Burial Grounds in the care of the Providence Monthly Meeting has been entrusted to a committee appointed for the purpose, called the Funeral and Burial Grounds Committee. Subject to the rules and direction adopted by the Monthly Meeting from time to time, this Committee is authorized to deal with all matters relating to the administration of the Burial Grounds. These rules apply to the Friends Section of North Burial Ground in Providence, Saylesville Burial Ground, both the Friends Section and the Arnold Section, and Cumberland Burial Ground.

All activities at these cemeteries are also subject to Chapter 23-18 "Cemeteries" of the laws of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations.

AVAILABILITY

Friends Section, Saylesville
Friends Section, North Burial Ground

These burial grounds are for the burial of members of Monthly Meeting and their immediate families. The term "immediate" shall be understood to mean husband, wife, children and their spouses, parents, brothers and sisters. Immediate family members need not be members of Monthly Meeting.

In addition to standard sized burial plots, there are surveyed and numbered plots specifically designed for cremated remains, sized to hold a cremains urn and standard cremains vault (maximum size two feet square and 18 inches to two feet high).

Arnold Section, Saylesville

In the Arnold Section, burial spaces are for sale to non-Friends through D. W. Bellows and Son, Inc., which are designated as the Funeral Director for this cemetery by agreement with Providence Monthly Meeting. Please contact either Bradford R. Bellows (president) or Allan R. Bellows II (vice president) at Bellows Funeral Chapel, 160 River Road, Lincoln, Rhode Island

02865, Tel: (401) 723-9792, Fax: (401) 723-0078. When the Clerk of the Funeral and Burial Grounds Committee receives confirmation of payment from D. W. Bellows & Son, deeds to the spaces, signed by the Providence Monthly Meeting Clerk, will be issued.

Cumberland Burial Grounds

For Cumberland Burial Grounds we do not know what space is available. Therefore, there shall be no plots available for sale.

The Committee attempts to keep up to date maps of all interments in North Burial Ground and the Friends Section and Arnold Section at Saylesville. Cumberland Burial Ground has not been surveyed and cataloged.

Reservation of Lots

Monthly Meeting members may reserve burial lots at North Burial Ground or Saylesville Friends Section by purchasing the right of burial therein, but not the title to the ground.

The right of burial shall not be transferable except by agreement with the Providence Monthly Meeting. If the purchaser of a lot shall die without having transferred it, the right shall cease as of the purchaser's death and thereafter the lot or lots in the case shall be free from any reservation. All transfers shall be subject to these and any future rules adopted by Monthly Meeting.

Deeds issued for the Arnold Section at Saylesville are not transferable except by agreement with Providence Monthly Meeting.

Interments

For all interments in either the North Burial Ground or Saylesville Friends Section, whether in a reserved lot or otherwise, application for burial permission shall be made to the clerk of the Funeral and Burial Grounds Committee. If not available, then another member of the Committee shall be contacted. No interments may take place without the express permission of the Funeral and Burial Grounds Committee and the Clerk of Providence Monthly meeting, who is legally designated as the person responsible for approving interment in accordance with Section 23-18-1(1) of the laws of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations.

A competent funeral director shall be in charge of every interment in all burial grounds. The name and address of the funeral director should be furnished to the Committee before the burial.

Concrete cases must be used in all graves in which coffins are placed.

No more than one coffin or two cremation urns may be buried in a single grave. Any deviation would have to be carefully reviewed by the Funeral and Burial Grounds Committee in

consultation with a licensed funeral director to assure conformance with Chapter 23-18 of the laws of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations.

All expenses of grave-digging, interment and stones or markers shall be paid by the estate or family of the deceased.

Character of Graves and Markers

In the interest of simplicity, with respect both to appearance and care of the burial ground, it is expected that the following regulations will be observed by all:

1. Not more than two stones (a headstone and a footstone) shall be used for each grave. Footstones should be small. The base of the headstone or marker must not be more than 50 percent of the width of the lot. The height should be modest.
2. All stones, markers, inscriptions and lettering shall conform to the standards of simplicity and dignity which the Monthly Meeting wishes to have observed.
3. Families are expected to submit drawings to the Burial Grounds Committee for approval before placing any monuments or markers.

Care and Upkeep

The Funeral and Burial Grounds Committee has responsibility for the general care and upkeep of the burial grounds. To help meet expenses at Saylesville Burial Ground, an annual letter of appeal for monetary aid will be mailed to interested families.

Assessments may be made, as deemed necessary, for upkeep of the burial grounds at Saylesville.

Special work on any grave such as filling, sodding, and resetting of stone shall be done at Saylesville after proper notification of the family of the person buried there.

Alteration or Changes

The Monthly Meeting reserves the right to alter these rules, including provisions, prices, and charges stated, at any time at its discretion.

Charges (as of 2005)

(Note: each burial plot accommodates up to two burial vaults, stacked vertically.)

Reservations in Friends Sections, North Burial Ground and Saylesville Burial Ground.

Members of the Monthly Meeting, each burial plot: \$300

Non-members, each burial plot: \$450

Cremains plots (Friends Section of Saylesville Burial Ground only):

Members of Monthly Meeting: \$200

Non members: \$300

Purchases of burial plots in Arnold Section, each burial plot: \$600.

Sample Letter of Reservation for Grave Lot

Dear.....;

This letter will serve as a memorandum with respect to (number) burial space(s) reserved for (names....) in the Friends Section of Saylesville Burial Ground which is under the care on the Providence Monthly Meeting of Friends.

In consideration of your payment of (amount) dollars to the Monthly Meeting treasurer the spaces as delineated on the map accompanying this communication are being held.

The Burial Grounds Committee members here give unanimous approval to this transaction which they believe is in accordance with your wishes.

This letter and map should be preserved to be presented in time of need.

Sincerely

Burial Grounds Committee

Providence Monthly Meeting of Friends

Clerk

Pre-Arranged Funeral Plans

For the purpose of relieving my _____ (closes relative) of the burden of making decisions and arrangements in the event of need, I herewith execute definite instructions regarding my funeral and care of my body.

Name: _____

—
Address: _____

—
Phone: _____

—

Name of Funeral

Director:_____

Address:_____

—

Phone:_____

—

Next of kin or close friend.

Name:_____

Address:_____

—

Phone:_____

—

I prefer: Cremation_____

 Burial_____

 Bequeathal

to_____

 Donation of anatomical

parts_____

Method

Type

Name & location of place

Dispose of

Urn in niche_____

Ashes by:

Urn burial_____

Urn entombment_____

Scatter_____

Body to

Earth burial_____

Receive:

Entombment_____

Type of Service:

Memorial at

Other (specify)

For: Friends & relatives_____ or Private _____

Special instructions (if any)

Instead of flowers, contributions may be made

to:_____

Signature:_____

Please Note:

-
1. Please make out this form in duplicate, one for the funeral committee and one for the family.
 2. Feel free to ask members of the funeral committee for any assistance that you need.
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