

# The Provident FRIEND

March 14, 2023

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

**Providence Monthly Meeting for Worship  
with a Concern for Business  
12th of Third Month, 2023  
Minutes**

Friends gathered by Zoom technology and at the Providence meetinghouse at 12:15 PM with 21 present.

Presiding clerk Victoria Ekk began the period of silent worship by reading the following queries taken from New England Yearly Minute *Faith and Practice*, 2011:

- *How do we nurture faithfulness as a foundation for every thought and action?*
- *Do we seek to live in affection and care as true Friends in our meeting, our family and our local community?*
- *How do we work to lessen the distresses of the afflicted and increase the happiness of Creation?*

The clerk read the following announcements concerning the life of the meeting:

- Please join us at the Southeast Quarterly Meeting on Third Month 19, beginning at noon at Providence Friends meetinghouse. A guest speaker from the Pokanoket nation will report on a project to address food insecurity for native peoples. Meeting for business will follow.
- PMM will host a virtual worship sharing on Third Month 22 at 7:00 PM in response to FCNL's request for input on Friends' stand on reproductive health. More information will be sent by email this week.

The following items of business were brought forward:

## CALENDAR

**Saturday, Mar 18, 11:00 AM,**  
Memorial Service for Dave McNab  
(Indoors and Zoom)

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

**Sunday, Mar 19, Noon,** Southeast  
Quarterly Meeting (Indoors and  
Zoom)

**Wednesday, March 22, 7:00 PM,**  
Worship Sharing on Reproductive  
Health (Zoom)

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

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

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

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

1. Peace and Social Action Committee reported on the Quaker-built boat The Golden Rule, which will be in Providence in Sixth Month to encourage interest in efforts against nuclear weapons. More information will be coming concerning opportunities for Friends to support this peace work.

2. First Day School Committee reported on plans for a youth mini-retreat on Fourth Month 2. Our older students, age 11 through high school, will be invited.

3. Finance Committee brought a request to increase two lines in the budget for the current fiscal year: to increase the Hospitality budget from \$700 to \$1,000, and to increase the Providence meetinghouse electricity budget from \$1,800 to \$2,300. Friends approved

4. For Finance Committee, Steve Thomas presented a proposed budget for fiscal year 2023-2024. Regarding income, he noted that the fundraising income comes largely from the Saylesville "Light-year" project, and that the figure for proposed contributions is aspirational; shortfalls could necessitate reductions in spending later in the year. Expected expenses are slightly above last year's. There was some discussion about the method used for predicting investment income. Additionally, Friends expressed a desire for more information about what our actual expenses have been, as opposed to the budgeted amounts. We ask Finance Committee to bring additional information to next month's business meeting.

5. Nominating Committee presented a list of proposed committee memberships for the 2023-2024 year. We note that more members are needed for the Nursery and Childcare Committee. Friends approved the list.

6. Ministry and Counsel Committee brought a proposed Memorial Minute for our Friend Dave McNab. Friends expressed a wish for some revisions; a new version will be prepared.

7. Ministry and Counsel Committee presented travel letters for Em McManamy and Bob Watt to travel to Cuba to help facilitate a series of Alternatives to Violence workshops. They hope to travel under the authority of the New England Yearly Meeting Puente de Amigos Committee. Our Ministry and Counsel Committee has found them clear for this work. We approve the letters and refer them to Quarterly Meeting for further discernment.

No further business appearing, we closed with a period of silent worship at 1:30 p.m., intending to meet next on the 9th of Fourth Month.

Respectfully submitted,  
Victoria Ekk, Presiding Clerk  
Rebecca Smith, Recording Clerk

### **Memorial Service for Dave McNab on March 18**

If you have already sent an RSVP, this is a reminder that the memorial service for Dave McNab will take place at the Providence Friends meetinghouse (99 Morris Avenue) at 11:00 AM on Saturday, March 18. Friends can also stream the service via the same Zoom link that we use for Meeting for Worship. For any questions, contact Vicky Ekk (clerk@providencefriends.org).

### **Southeast Quarterly Meeting on March 19**

All are invited to the Southeast Quarterly Meeting hosted by Providence Friends Meeting on Sunday, March 19. Friends will gather from the four monthly meetings in the quarter – Providence, Smithfield, Westerly, and Worcester. The schedule will be worship at 10:00 AM, potluck brunch and fellowship at 11:00 AM, program at noon, and Quarterly Meeting for Business from 1:00 to 2:00 PM.

The program at noon will be a presentation by members of the Pocasset Pokanoket

Tribe and Narragansett gardener Rocky Johnson about the Pocasset Pokanoket Tribe's Indigenous Roots Forever program.

Indigenous Roots Forever is a tribal community micro-farming program developed by the Indigenous People's Network of Massachusetts and Rhode Island, and fiscally sponsored by the Pocasset Pokanoket Land Trust, a tribal 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. The program involves a healthy-food-security project and is led by Rocky Johnson, a Narragansett Indian. It serves marginalized BIPOC communities in Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut by teaching people how to build raised garden beds and grow their own medicine through herbs, fruits, and vegetables. The farming techniques used are traditional Native American and no chemical fertilizers or pesticides are used. The program provides hands-on training, and volunteers also plant and harvest fresh foods for those who are incapable of gardening, such as the elderly and the disabled. It is hoped that the presentation of this project right at the start of the spring will spark interest among Friends to volunteer to help with time, talents, and treasure. For more information on this initiative click [here](#) .

The agenda for the Quarterly Meeting for Business will be a treasurer's report for Southeast Quarter, a report on the Quarter's Aldrich Fund, a memorial minute for Providence member Ken Lyon (1941-2021), updates from the four monthly meetings, and news from NEYM.

All are invited to attend all or part of the day! For more information contact Vicky Ekk or Rebecca Leuchak.

## **Worship Sharing on Reproductive Health on March 22**

The Supreme Court's overturning of Roe v. Wade has had a strong impact on women across the nation. The Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) has requested that Quaker meetings help the organization discern whether or how its current policy on this matter should be changed. FCNL has noted that Friends are not

in unity on abortion issues. As a result, it has taken no position for or against abortion legislation.

Providence Monthly Meeting has supported FCNL's work on a variety of legislative initiatives. In response to FCNL's request for assistance discerning a possible change in its policy, Ministry and Counsel Committee will hold an online worship sharing on the matter of reproductive health at 7:00 PM on Wednesday, March 22. The link and supporting document has been sent out by email. If you didn't receive it and want to attend, contact Vicky Ekk.

The worship sharing will explore the following queries: What does reproductive health care look like in the world that you and your community seek? How are the Quaker values and testimonies relevant to the issue of abortion? Should the FCNL Policy Statement be revised on the issues of abortion and reproductive health? If so, what should the Policy Statement say?

## **Updated Meeting Directory**

*from Communications Committee*

Communications Committee will be publishing an updated edition of the Meeting Directory later this month. If you have had a change in contact information since the last edition, which was in October, or if you're not currently listed in the Directory but would like to be, please contact Dan Lederer ([dlederer1@verizon.net](mailto:dlederer1@verizon.net)).

In order to engage fully in the life of the Meeting, it's also helpful to be on the Meeting Email List, often referred to as "the listserve", which functions as our electronic bulletin board. It provides upcoming event notices and other items of interest to Friends, including links to Zoom meetings. If you are not receiving these notices but would like to be, contact Dan.

## **Latest Acquisitions in the Meeting Library**

*from Library Committee*

Friends are reminded that the books in the Providence meetinghouse library are available for borrowing. We recently added a number of books from the collections of our late Friends Dave McNab and John Gaffney. Some of the titles are *The Peace Book* by Louise Diamond, *The Browns of Providence* (two volumes) by James B. Hedges, *The Teaching of Buddha*, and *On Doing Good: The Quaker Experiment* by Gerald Jonas.

## **Clerk's Corner: Attitude**

*from Vicky Ekk*

On most weekday mornings, I travel into Providence from Pawtucket to teach Spanish to high school freshmen at a small independent school. On the wall of my assigned classroom are a variety of inspirational posters. One of them catches my eye every day. "Attitude is everything. Pick a good one." Instantly checking my own attitude makes me realize how often I am led by my feelings rather than take time to use Quaker principles to guide all my actions. A change in attitude can make a world of difference in my work with rowdy 14 to 15 year olds! If I've had a rough start to the day, I can carry those grumpy feelings right across town and act upon them without even realizing that is what is happening. And without intending to, I can impact those around me in a less than Friendly way.

Intention and impact. What is the difference between what I intend by an action or statement and how that action or statement impacts those around me? As a parent, I remember how often I had to deal with a couple of tearful faces saying: "That's not what I wanted to do. I didn't mean it *that way!*"

Children learn by their mistakes and so do most adults. One of the lessons repeated throughout my life is that sometimes what I intend does not match the impact of my

actions or words. Because every one of us is a unique human being, we each interpret actions or words differently. Remembering that helps me to change my attitude and take the time to ask my Kindergarten granddaughter what she intended to do by drawing with markers on her younger sibling's face and torso. Because I took that step, we were able to proceed to fix the problem without tears and with much soap.

Taking a minute to set aside a negative attitude and pick a Friendly one helps my students or my grandchildren to think beyond their own intentions to the impact of their actions. It helps me as well to be in a better place to work with them rather than be oppositional. And isn't that one of our hopes, to live our Quaker faith in such a way that we create an environment that models the type of world we seek?

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**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.**

**The Provident FRIEND**  
Newsletter of  
Providence Monthly Meeting of  
the Religious Society of Friends  
99 Morris Avenue  
Providence, RI 02906