

PROVIDENCE FRIENDS MEETING HANDBOOK

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Providence Friends Meeting house

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ABOUT US

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. Worshippers 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, please enter the meeting room quietly 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 is 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 Friends only to the extent that Friends participate, it is important that as many as possible attend. Members and attenders are encouraged to participate in our Meeting for Business but minutes may be approved only by members. 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 sense of the meeting has several options: (a) to agree to stand aside, (b) to ask to be recorded as opposed, or (c) to ask that the meeting not proceed, stating his or her reasons why. In the last instance, the clerk may ask those gathered to determine either that the concern expressed is weighty enough that the decision should be delayed, or that the objection is not germane to the decision and that the meeting should proceed.

Committees: Members and attenders are encouraged to participate on committees. (Certain committees require membership, these being Ministry and Counsel, Finance, Pastoral Care, 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. With the exception of Ministry and Counsel, all committee appointments are for one year and can be renewed annually.

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, the Presiding Clerk, and the Meeting archivist, 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 Presiding Clerk may be re-appointed annually. 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; 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; 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. At times when the Assistant Presiding Clerk is unavailable, the Presiding Clerk will ask 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.

Treasurer: The Treasurer is fully authorized to manage the finances of Providence (RI) Monthly Meeting of Friends. This authority includes, but is not limited to the opening and closing of bank and security accounts, and the purchase, sale, and exchange of shares in such accounts. With respect to our yearly budget, the Treasurer may exceed any specific line by 5% or \$100, whichever is larger. With the concurrence of the Clerk of the Finance Committee, this limit may be extended to 10% or \$200, whichever is larger.

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 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 that 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, who can then send the message out with the attachment.

Financial Contributions: The Treasurer presents information regarding the status of the annual budget at Meeting for Business after each quarter, 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 at the meetinghouse 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.

ADULT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Mission: To provide a variety of educational opportunities relating to Quakerism for adult members and attenders

Responsibilities:

- Identify topics of interest to Friends.
- Recruit Friends to lead classes or courses.
- Sponsor guest speakers.

BURIAL GROUNDS COMMITTEE

(Members are chosen by Property Committee)

Mission: To address all matters in relation to the administration of the three burial grounds under the care of Meeting.

Responsibilities:

- Oversee the Friends Section of the North Burial Ground (in Providence).
- Oversee the Saylesville Burial Ground (in Lincoln).
- Oversee the Cumberland Burial Ground.
- Report to Property Committee.

Additional details: Committee members will provide information specific to these burial grounds on request (see Appendix).

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

Mission: To enhance communication among Meeting members and attenders as well as between Meeting and the outside community.

Responsibilities:

- Edit and publish the Meeting Newsletter.
- Oversee the Meeting Email Lists.
- Maintain the Meeting Website.
- Update the Meeting Directory and publish a revised edition every six months.
- Revise the Meeting Handbook as needed.
- Maintain the Meeting Archives.
- Provide brochures in the foyer.

Additional details: The Meeting Archives are a digital repository of past and current information including the composition of committees, the Meeting Handbook, minutes of committee meetings, minutes of Meetings for Business, treasurer's reports, newsletters, State of the Society

reports, contracts, and grants. 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 the presiding clerk and the archivist. On at least a yearly base, the archivist forwards minutes of committees (although not Ministry and Counsel) and of Meeting for Business, newsletters, and State of the Society reports to the NEYM archives at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

(Membership required)

Mission: To oversee the handling of moneys and the accounting system used by the Treasurer.

Responsibilities:

- Prepare a preliminary budget proposal and present it to Meeting for Business three months before the start of the next fiscal year.
- Prepare an annual budget proposal and present it to Meeting for Business two months before the start of the next fiscal year.
- Ensure that a yearly audit of Meeting finances takes place.
- Determine Meeting investments.
- Report any concerns to Meeting for Business.
- Provide grants from the Quaker Education Support fund.

Additional details: 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.

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 for the committee’s monthly schedule of work.)

Grants from the Quaker Education Support fund are available only to Meeting members. They provide partial scholarship for tuition to Quaker schools and support for families’ participation

in other Quaker programs such as Quaker camps or Quaker service trips. We encourage families who have received support to consider repaying the fund at some time in the future according to their ability to do so.

FUNDRAISING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Mission: To enhance Meeting's present and future financial well-being

Responsibilities:

- Organize fundraising events.
- Promote annual giving.
- Pursue gifts to Meeting's endowment.

HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE

Mission: To host Meeting functions

Responsibilities:

- Oversee fellowship hour.
- Recruit greeters.
- Maintain kitchen supplies.
- Support other Meeting-related events, Quarterly and regional committee meetings

Additional details: The committee maintains a sign-up sheet in the social room to share responsibility for fellowship hour with members and attenders. One member of the committee serves as coordinator each month and asks 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. 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 the Appendix 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

Mission: To oversee the Providence meetinghouse library

Responsibilities:

- Maintain all books, pamphlets, periodicals, and videos belonging to Meeting.
- Purchases books and other materials for the library.
- Catalog new acquisitions.
- Oversee loans of library materials.
- Decide which books can be discarded or stored for future research.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Mission: To encourage membership in Providence Monthly Meeting

Responsibilities:

- Document attendance at Meeting for Worship at both meetinghouses.
- Document changes in membership.
- Prepare the annual statistical report to NEYM.
- Invite and encourage membership.
- Ensure that our practice for welcoming new members and junior members happens.
- Follow up with new attenders, Friends who are shut-ins, and local Friends who are no longer attending.
- Communicate with older junior members.

Additional details: The committee is responsible for keeping track of the membership statistics throughout the year and for reporting any changes annually to 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. We do not automatically record children as junior members when they are born to Meeting members or when one or both parents are approved for membership. Rather, we ask the parents to request junior membership for their child or children, because we want to be sure that both parents are in agreement with the request.

MINISTRY AND COUNSEL COMMITTEE

(Membership required; members are chosen by Ministry and Counsel)

Mission: To oversee and advance the spiritual well-being of the Meeting.

Background & history:

Early Friends began a practice of having a smaller body within the meeting community who met separately to worship together, discuss the emerging Quaker approach to faith, and hold the meeting and its members in prayer. The Friends in these meetings who were known for the power of their vocal ministry began to be named as ministers; some traveled extensively to spread the Quaker message. Those Friends who were 'most grown in the Power and the life, in the pure discerning in the Truth' (Dewsbury, Works, 1689) were named as elders. These were Friends most alert to the spiritual and physical needs of the community and who nurtured its life, organization, and business practices; some also provided spiritual accompaniment to traveling ministers.

In New England these bodies of ministers and elders evolved into what is usually called Ministry & Counsel. While all Friends have a responsibility for ministry and for caring for one another as members of a meeting, Ministry & Counsel is charged with giving particular attention to nurturing ministry and being alert to the spiritual life and physical

needs of the entire meeting community. Caring for the vitality of worship, pastoral care, clearness, encouraging ministry, spiritual nurture and the promotion of individual spiritual practices, and conflict resolution — all are loving manifestations of a functioning Ministry & Counsel.

(from Draft NEYM Revised F&P, 10/2021)

Responsibilities:

- Oversee and care for meetings for worship, including practical arrangements such as assigning facing bench responsibility.
- Observe quality of vocal ministry, offering encouragement or informal guidance when called for.
- Receive and consider all applications for membership, transfer, and discontinuance, including naming clearness committees, and make recommendations to Meeting for Business for approval.
- Shepherd marriages under the care of the meeting. (See Appendix)
- In the event of a death within the meeting, work with Pastoral Care and Burial Grounds Committees to assist the family, including having oversight of an appropriate memorial meeting. (See Handbook section on Funerals for details.)
- Prepare memorial minutes for deceased members, to be forwarded to Meeting for Business.
- Prepare the annual State of the Society report for consideration by Meeting for Business.
- Assist members or attenders in times of personal need in whatever way seems appropriate.
- Select members of the Pastoral Care Committee, some of whom may be members of Ministry and Counsel.
- Assist members and attenders who request clearness committees on matters of personal discernment, whether informally or by referral from Meeting for Business or another committee.
- Administer the Deborah Jenks Fund and the Ruth Arnold Kellam Fund.
- Nominate monthly meeting Presiding Clerk and Assistant Presiding Clerk.

Detailed descriptions and guidance for these functions can be found in NEYM's Faith & Practice (Draft Revision, 10/2021) and elsewhere in this Handbook.

Ministry and Counsel must be careful to respect and protect the confidences and trust of all matters brought before the committee.

Membership of committee:

The committee is composed of 12 seasoned members of Providence Monthly Meeting. Formal membership in the meeting is required. Members are appointed for up to two 3-year terms; they may be reappointed after one year off the committee. New committee members are approached and approved by the current committee, which recommends them to Meeting for Business for approval. In addition, the Presiding Clerk of Providence Monthly Meeting is an ex officio member of this committee.

Meeting members who are appointed to Ministry & Counsel are Friends with a deeply rooted commitment and experience of paying attention to the Inward Guide. Their lives give evidence of spiritual wisdom, discretion and compassion. They are faithful in attendance at meetings for worship and for business. Their own active spiritual lives and grounding in Quaker tradition are resources that inform their decision-making.

Draft NEYM Revised F&P, 10/2021

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

(Membership required)

Mission: To recruit Friends for committees and for individual positions

Responsibilities:

- Contact all Friends active in Meeting to determine their willingness to serve on committees and in individual positions (note that Ministry and Counsel chooses its own nominees and the nominees for Pastoral Care Committee, and Property Committee chooses nominees for Burial Grounds Committee).
- Present a preliminary report of nominees to Meeting for Business no later than April of any given year.
- Present a proposal for staffing all committees and individual positions to Meeting for Business no later than May of any given year.

Additional details: The committee's 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. Appointments to individual positions (such as presiding clerk) and committee membership are for one year with the exception of Ministry and Counsel, whose members are appointed for six year terms. Only Meeting members may serve on Ministry and Counsel, Pastoral Care, Finance, and Nominating Committees.

NURSERY COMMITTEE

Mission: To provide a safe and welcoming environment for young children.

Responsibilities:

- Provide Nursery staffing during Meeting for Worship and Meeting for Business.
- Maintain Nursery supplies.
- Identify equipment and procedures to maximize the children's safety in the Nursery.

PASTORAL CARE COMMITTEE

(Membership required; members are chosen by Ministry and Counsel)

Mission: To provide attention and assistance to individual Friends in need

Responsibilities:

- Maintain awareness of and support of Friends in need of help with personal and/or spiritual issues.
- Assist Friends in times of crisis.
- Recruit, coordinate, and support volunteer Friends (not on the committee) in their efforts to help others.
- Reach out to those unable to attend or fully participate in the life of the Meeting.
- Provide support for memorial services.
- Oversee memorial services and funerals.
- Report to Ministry and Counsel Committee at that group's meeting each month.
- Keep all matters confidential.

PEACE AND SOCIAL ACTION COMMITTEE

Mission: To serve as a forum and clearing house for ideas concerning peace work and social service which originate within the Monthly Meeting, and to function as a communications link between the Monthly Meeting and the individuals and groups outside of Meeting who share our concerns for peace and social welfare in the larger community.

Responsibilities:

- Communicate with other religious and service groups and with members of legislative bodies on issues with which we are concerned.
- Providing ongoing support and help to the American Friends Service Committee and Friends Committee on National Legislation.
- Educate Meeting members and attenders regarding community needs and social problems and issues concerning peace.
- Coordinate peace and service activities undertaken by the Meeting.
- From its budget allocation, determine donations to outside organizations.

PROPERTY COMMITTEE

Mission: Oversee the care and upkeep of the buildings and grounds of the Providence and Saylesville meetinghouses.

Responsibilities:

- Ensure adequate condition of the yards, sidewalks, and parking facilities.
- Maintain the buildings inside and out.

- Purchase any necessary equipment to accomplish these tasks.
- Provide kitchen and bathroom supplies.
- Replace furnishings as necessary.

Additional details: 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 the Appendix for Important Locations and Outside Services)

PROVIDENCE MEETINGHOUSE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Mission: To oversee all activities taking place at the Providence meetinghouse

Responsibilities:

- Receive all applications for meetinghouse use, both single events and recurring events, and determine the suitability of events before scheduling them.
- Identify a host for each event who is responsible for meetinghouse security.
- Maintain an electronically-accessible calendar showing all events.
- Administer meetinghouse use contracts (write, negotiate, and monitor for compliance).
- Revise guidelines for meetinghouse use as needed.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Mission: To provide for the care, spiritual nurture, and religious education of the schoolage children within the Meeting community.

Responsibilities:

- Provide weekly First Day School classes and programs.
- Develop curriculum.
- Recruit Friends to assist with teaching.
- Encourage an understanding of children as spiritual beings
- Encourage participation of our young people in regional and NEYM programs

Additional details: First Day School classes and programs are offered weekly from 10:15 to 11:00 AM every Sunday during the academic year for children in kindergarten through 12th 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. After a time at Meeting, First Day Students leave with their teachers for FDS classes.

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 Meeting policy to provide two adults per FDS group. We have found it useful to employ well vetted local university students as assistants for the program.

Presently, the formal program for First Day School commences the first First Day after Labor Day and concludes in early June. To provide Religious Education teachers time for planning and rest, the committee sets up a summer play supervision schedule with adult volunteers from the Meeting.

In addition, we communicate and collaborate with New England Yearly Meeting and other Quaker organizations. We encourage Meeting families to participate in other Quaker events and offerings that may be beneficial for spiritual growth and sense of connection to our regional and global Quaker world.

(See the Appendix for Special Events and Curricular information)

SAYLESVILLE MEETINGHOUSE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Mission: To oversee all activities taking place at the Saylesville meetinghouse.

Responsibilities:

- Receive all applications for meetinghouse use, both single events and recurring events, and determine the suitability of events before scheduling them.
- Identify a host for each event who is responsible for meetinghouse security.
- Maintain an electronically-accessible calendar showing all events.
- Develop events and programs to take place at the meetinghouse.
- Administer meetinghouse use contracts (write, negotiate, and monitor for compliance).
- Explore grant opportunities.
- Provide outreach to the local community.
- Revise guidelines for meetinghouse use as needed.

SPECIAL EVENTS COMMITTEE

Mission: To promote Meeting events organized by or for Meeting itself.

Responsibilities:

- Organize the annual Christmas Gathering, the May Breakfast, Family Game Night, and Movie Night.
- Organize other special events as the opportunity arises.
- Encourage individuals, groups, and Meeting committees to create appropriate events that promote involvement of our community.
- Facilitate the planning, set-up and clean-up efforts for an event, including estimating any costs involved..

APPENDIX

MINISTRY AND COUNSEL

Oversight of Weddings: The committee appoints a marriage clearness committee upon written request of members or attenders who wish their marriage to take place “under the care of the Meeting” or “in the manner of Friends” either in a meetinghouse or elsewhere. The marriage clearness 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. The marriage clearness committee reports to the full committee, and if the committee approves of the marriage, it so recommends to Meeting for Business. After consideration, if Business Meeting approves, a committee of oversight is appointed by the presiding clerk at the prior suggestion of the couple. Of note, 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.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

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 in file in ancient Membership basket.
- 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, 3rd year. (2017)

FINANCE COMMITTEE

CALENDAR

September: General discussion; review audit report.
 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; review minutes for proposal at Meeting for Business (Treasurer authorizations and budget overage policy); 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 Providence Monthly 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. Notify 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, supplies, and greeter:

- a. Ensure that each committee member is responsible for coordinating one of the twelve months of the year.
- b. Recruit members as needed.
- c. Arrange for supplies to fill bathroom dispensers.

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. Create monthly sign up schedule for coffee hour and greeter.
- d. Make sure that there are instructions for coffee hour, greeter, and potluck.

4. **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. Further Responsibilities:

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 goods from a 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. **Special Events:**

- a. Make sure enough supplies are on hand.
- b. Buy more supplies as needed. Submit receipts for reimbursement.
- c. Maintain inventory of equipment.
 - (1) Large punch bowl and tea service
 - (2) Table cloths
 - (3) Vases

- (4) Salt and pepper sets
- (5) Flatware and dinner service

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.
- γ. 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. Assist in cleanup of the meetinghouse

3. Assist with hospitality in special events

“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 worshippers and welcome them.
- Introduce yourself to newcomers.
- Hand newcomers a copy of the Welcome booklet 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 either to the library or the meeting room as they wish.
- Invite anyone in the library 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 tall 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 boiler room on the back wall, in the new basement storage room on the south wall, and upstairs across from the stairlift.

Fire Extinguishers: They are located in the kitchen, the downstairs hallway, the boiler room, the entry hallway, the third floor classroom, the expansion room, and the nursery.

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 or to lend or allow anyone else to use the keys.

Outside services we currently use:

Fire Extinguishers — A. Fire & Safety Co., Inc., 101 Mt. Hope Ave., Bristol, RI 02809
401-396-5914

Heating

National Grid: Customer Service (800) 322-3223
(That serves both meetinghouses.)

Insurance — Church Mutual, [Ask Bruce Carlsten for contact info.]

Contractors — **A list of contractors used by the Meeting is posted in the downstairs hallway.**

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

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. 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.
5. 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.

Ministry and Counsel, Pastoral Care, Finance, and Nominating are only open to Members of the Meeting. All other committees are open to both attenders and Members of the Meeting.

PROVIDENCE MEETINGHOUSE SCHEDULER GUIDELINES

Responding to a request. The scheduler will send a request form for Meetinghouse Use to anyone making a request for use of the meetinghouse, this to include the name and telephone number of the person requesting, the name of the organization, the contact person for the organization and his/her telephone number, the Friends Meeting liaison, the name of the event, dates requested with start and end times, the room or rooms requested, the number of adults and children using the space, and any specific needs. An expected donation will be specified and, for established legal entities, a signed agreement and a certificate of insurance will be required.

Granting a request. If, based on the above information, the event seems appropriate and space is available, the scheduler will grant the request and place the event on the meetinghouse calendar. Providence meetinghouse cannot comfortably accommodate more than 180 people. (100 in the upstairs meeting room – including the library – and 80 downstairs). Downstairs can reasonably accommodate 9 tables and 72 chairs. Request from Moses Brown School for Quaker worship or Quaker education will be given priority. 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 Management Committee.

Weddings, Funerals, Memorial Services. We welcome the use of the meetinghouse by members and attenders of our Meeting and by other Friends for weddings and funerals or memorials. Weddings will generally be under the care of our Meeting, under the care of another Meeting, or under our joint care. When two Friends Meetings are involved, which one assumes the responsibility for appointing the Committees of Clearness & Oversight needs to be clarified

at the outset with the individuals desiring to be married. The use of the meetinghouse for weddings, funerals, memorial services, or other religious ceremonies by outside groups, regardless of their religious tradition, will be considered on a case-by-case basis, bearing in mind that our meetinghouse is to be used primarily for Quaker worship and related activities.

Fees. The customary donation is \$50 - \$500 per day of use. The scheduler will determine a fee for each event, taking into account heating and cooling cost, the use of the kitchen, cleaning, and general maintenance.

Contracts and Insurance. A contract will be written for any group using the meetinghouse on a recurring basis. A contract will also be written for any legally established entities requesting use of the meetinghouse for single or recurring use, and such organizations must provide a certificate of insurance that includes coverage for medical and sexual misconduct, coverage for property damage to rented premises of \$100,000, and liability coverage of \$1,000,000 per occurrence with a cap of at least \$2,000,000 per year. The insurance policy must specifically name Providence Friends Meeting as a loss payee and an additional insured. The scheduler will make clear that two responsible adults must be present at all times when children are present.

BURIAL GROUNDS COMMITTEE

Burial Under the 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 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.

At no time should any heavy equipment or work on stones or gravesites be made without prior authorization of the Burial Grounds Committee. Any contractor working in the burial grounds must provide proper credentials and certificates of insurance adding Providence Monthly Meeting as an additional insured.

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 the Burial Grounds Committee and the Treasurer of Providence Monthly Meeting. Upon confirmation of payment for the burial spaces, 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 at this time.

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 catalogued.

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 unused 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 Providence 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.

A competent licensed funeral director shall be in charge of every interment in all burial grounds. The name and address of the licensed 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 two coffins 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.

The family or estate of the deceased will be responsible for all costs associated with the opening and closing of the grave, including but not limited to re-seeding or sodding.

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.

Restrictions

The following conditions and limitations pertain to the burial plots in all Burial Grounds:

1. That the Plot shall be used for the burial of the dead; and
2. That the Plot shall not be enclosed in any manner nor shall the Plot be divided; and
3. That the Plot may be adorned by one monument and or stone memorializing the dead; and
4. That no tree, shrub, plant or flower shall be planted on the Plot without permission of the Burial Grounds Committee; and
5. That the Plot shall be subject to the By-Laws, Rules and Regulations of Providence Friends Meeting Handbook, as they presently stand or are later amended; and
6. That for any breach of the By-Laws, Rules and Regulations of Providence Friends Meeting Handbook, the Burial Grounds Committee may enter the Plot and take steps to remove any plant, structure or item in violation of the same or to do whatever else is reasonable or necessary to make good the breach.

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 2021)

(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: \$1,000
Non-members, each burial plot: \$1,500

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

Members of Monthly Meeting: \$500
Non members: \$800

Purchases of burial plots in Arnold Section, each burial plot: \$2,500.

All expenses of opening and closing the grave, interment and placing of stones or markers shall be paid by the estate or family of the deceased. The family or estate of the deceased will also be responsible for all costs associated with re-seeding or sodding.

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 yo