

MEETING CALENDAR

Saturday, Feb 17, 10:00 AM to noon, Saylesville Book Swap (Saylesville Meetinghouse)

Sunday, Feb 18, Meeting for Worship: at Providence, 10:00 AM (Indoors and Zoom, Hybrid*); at Saylesville, 10:30 AM (Indoors); at Conanicut (Norman Bird Sanctuary), 10:30 AM (Indoors)

Saturday, Feb 24, 11:00 AM, Memorial Service for Carla Dowben (Providence Meetinghouse and Zoom)

Saylesville, 10:30 AM (Indoors); at Conanicut (Norman Bird Sanctuary), 10:30 AM (Indoors)

Sunday, Feb 25, Meeting for Worship: at Providence, 10:00 AM (Indoors and Zoom); at Saylesville, 10:30 AM (Indoors); at Conanicut (Norman Bird Sanctuary), 10:30 AM (Indoors)

Sunday, Mar 3, Meeting for Worship: at Providence, 10:00 AM (Indoors and Zoom, Hybrid*); at Saylesville, 10:30 AM (Indoors); at Conanicut (Norman Bird Sanctuary), 10:30 AM (Indoors)

Sunday, Mar 3, Noon, Movie "Rustin" (Providence Meetinghouse)

Sunday, Mar 10, Meeting for Worship: at Providence, 10:00 AM (Indoors and Zoom); at Saylesville, 10:30 AM (Indoors); at Conanicut (Norman Bird Sanctuary), 10:30 AM (Indoors)

Sunday, Mar 10, Meeting for Business at Providence, Noon (Indoors and Zoom, Hybrid*)

*Hybrid = the in-person and online meetings are combined.

**Providence Monthly Meeting for Worship
with a Concern for Business
11th of Second Month, 2024
Minutes**

Friends gathered at the Providence meetinghouse at noon with 12 present and three on Zoom.

Presiding clerk Ariana Steele began the period of silent worship by reading the following queries taken from New England Yearly Meeting's *Advices and Queries*:

Do you maintain an appropriate balance among work, service, worship, family, and recreation? Are you ready to rest if God asks it of you?

A memorial service for our member Carla Dowben will be held at Providence Meetinghouse on Saturday 2/24/24 at 11 AM. It will also be accessible by Zoom. Please let the family know if you plan to attend by phoning or emailing Stephanie Day at 267-912-4506 or stephanie.k.day@zs.com by February 21st at the latest.

The following items of business were brought forward:

1. Ministry and Counsel Committee reported that a clearness committee consisting of Elsie Morse, Betsy Cazden, and Paul Graseck has met with Alexandra Leonard and they recommend that she be accepted as a member of our society. Friends approved and appointed the aforementioned Friends to organize a suitable welcome for Alex.
2. Ministry and Counsel committee recommended adding Thia Lord to fill the vacancy on that committee. Friends approved.
3. The Finance Committee brought a draft budget for the 2024-2025 fiscal year. There is some confusion about how the cost of teenage helpers is to be divided between the Nursery Child Care and Religious Education Committees. There was discussion about the variety of ways in which the Meeting makes donations to other Quaker and non-Quaker organizations; Friends suggested that we consider increasing our charitable contributions. The line for the Providence meetinghouse reserve fund has been greater in the last few years than the amount recommended by the reserve study that was done some years ago. In discussion, we noted that it may be time for an updated

study and we asked Property Committee to take this step. We thank the Finance Committee for their work and anticipate receiving a revised version of the budget at a future meeting.

No further business appearing, we closed with a period of silent worship at 1:25 p.m., intending to meet next on the 10th of Third month.

Respectfully submitted,
Ariana Steele, Clerk
Rebecca Smith, Recording Clerk

Memorial Service for Carla Dowben February 24

A memorial service for Carla Dowben will take place at the Providence meetinghouse on Saturday February 24 starting at 11:00 AM. For those not able to attend in person but who would like to dial in virtually, a Zoom link will be provided via the Meeting email list.

After the service, the family will be providing desserts and refreshments downstairs. Any additional food contributions will be greatly appreciated.

The family needs to know how many will be attending, so please let us know if you are coming, or planning to dial in, by phoning or emailing Stephanie Day at 267-912-4506 or stephanie.k.day@zs.com by February 21 at the latest.

Movie "Rustin" on March 3

After potluck lunch at the Providence meetinghouse on Sunday March 3, Special Events Committee will be showing the newly released and highly acclaimed movie "Rustin." This is the story of Bayard Rustin, a Quaker who was the principal organizer of the 1963 March on Washington. Colman Domingo, the actor who plays Rustin, has been nominated for an Academy Award for his performance in the film.

The Work of Staffing Our Committees Begins

from Nominating Committee

It's never too early to get started, so Nominating Committee is now beginning its work of staffing our various committees for the upcoming fiscal year, which begins June 1. We are again focusing on Friends who are currently on no committees, so those of you in that category may be receiving a call.

As everyone is aware, Meeting has no paid staff. Instead, the task of maintaining Meeting's activities and infrastructure is the responsibility of our 18 committees, and participation on committees is essential to the life of our Meeting.

Nominating Committee's hope is that those of you who are already serving on one or more committees will agree to continue to do so during the upcoming fiscal year. **If you want to make a change**, such as adding a committee or switching to a different committee, please contact Dan Lederer (dleder1@verizon.net) soon since the committee hopes to bring a report to Meeting for Business in March. If we don't hear from you, which is fine, we'll take that to mean that you are willing to continue on your present committee or committees.

If you're not currently on any committees but would consider joining one and would like to hear more about the many opportunities to serve Meeting that committees provide, please contact Dan so that he can go over the possible choices with you.

The Ruth Arnold Kellam Fund

from Ministry and Counsel Committee

Ministry and Counsel Committee administers the Ruth Arnold Kellam Fund, which was established for the purpose of supporting Quaker retreats. We've interpreted this to mean that the fund also can be used to help defray travel expenses to Quaker conferences and gatherings such as Yearly Meeting Sessions. If you are considering traveling to such an event and need some financial support, contact committee clerk Dan Lederer (dleder1@verizon.net).

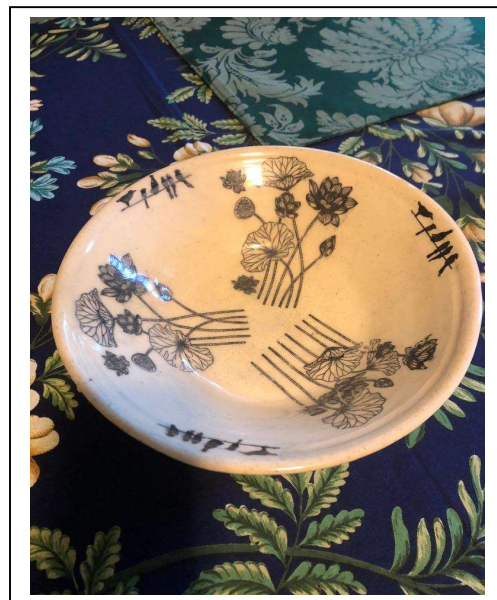
Art from Meredith Stern

The "Grimke Sisters" and "Ursula Franklin" are images of Quakers whose lives centered working toward a more just world from a Quaker center. Both pieces were created for a book

called Firebrands: Activists You Didn't Learn About in School. The Grimke Sisters, born into a slaveholding family, joined the Religious Society of Friends and became the first women to join the Anti-Slavery Movement. Ursula Franklin was a scientist who centered her work in her Quaker beliefs in non-violence in human action as she worked towards a more just and peaceful world.



Art from Em McManamy



I have been delighting in ceramics on the wheel for some years, on a very part-time basis. Working on the wheel is a form of meditation for me; all thought is quieted and my focus is entirely on the observational elements of touch and body kinesthesia. I often close my eyes to improve my observation! Here are two of my recent creations that have brought me joy.

Call for More Art

Thank you to Meredith and Em for submitting their beautiful creations. If you're engaged in some sort of artistic expression, please consider sending a sample of your work to the newsletter (providentfriend@providencefriends.org) along with a short description of how it came about. If what you submit has a Quaker theme, so much the better, but that's not necessary. We're hoping to hear from you!

On Being Your Own Best Friend

from Dan Lederer

As Quakers, we're asked during silent worship to listen to that still, small voice that will guide us to righteous action. But are we really expected to hear an actual voice, or is this just a metaphor for the thoughts that arise out of silence?

In answer to that question I suggest trying the following exercise in role-playing: Imagine someone with all the attributes you would want in a best friend, someone who is attentive, non-judgmental, supportive, wise, and kind. Then have a conversation with this friend, speaking your own words as well as the words of your friend. It's OK to say whatever's on your mind, since nothing will be divulged to anyone else. Nothing you say to this discreet friend can cause you embarrassment or shame, so there's no need to keep any secrets. And you needn't be afraid of rejection or of what might be said in response, since you're in control of both sides of the conversation. One tip: This works best when spoken out loud, so a private setting is optimal.

Now you may be saying to yourself, "Wait a second. I don't have all those sterling qualities, so how can I play that role." But the fact is that you do have those qualities. Circumstances may prevent them from being apparent in every instance, but we all have the capacity to be that kind of best friend.

Although you can check in with this friend at any time, the interchange may be most productive when you're distressed about something. For example, the source of your discomfort may be an emotion that you're not proud of, such as jealousy, envy, or anger, but this friend isn't going to judge you harshly, so you can let down your guard. You are in control, and you can determine that the friend first comforts you and then offers you the best advice he or she can muster.

So is what I'm suggesting in the realm of spirituality, a way to get in touch with "that of God" in ourselves, or is it just pop psychology? I'll leave that up to you to decide. However, I can say with certainty that it's a great way to practice being the best version of yourself, and to rehearse being a wonderful friend to anyone who crosses your path.

Presiding Clerk: **Ariana Steele** clerk@providencefriends.org
Newsletter: **Jen McFadden and Dan Lederer** providentfriend@providencefriends.org
Website: **Sam Schifman** webclerk@providencefriends.org
Questions and Information: **Steve Schwartz** info@providencefriends.org

Address for Contributions:

**Providence Monthly Meeting
c/o Peter Swaszek
Box 1787
Kingston, RI 02881**

**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