

# The Provident FRIEND

April 16, 2024

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

## MEETING CALENDAR

Saturday, Apr 20, 10:00 AM to noon, Saylesville Book Swap (Saylesville Meetinghouse)

Sunday, Apr 21, 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, Apr 28, 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, May 4, 8:00 AM (to 11:00 AM), May Breakfast (Providence Meetinghouse)

Sunday, May 5, Meeting for Worship: at Providence, 10:00 AM (Indoors and Zoom); at Saylesville, 10:30 AM (Indoors); at Conanicut (Weeden Lane, Jamestown), 9:30 AM (Indoors)

Sunday, May 12, Meeting for Worship: at Providence, 10:00 AM (Indoors and Zoom); at Saylesville, 10:30 AM (Indoors); at Conanicut (Weeden Lane, Jamestown), 9:30 AM (Indoors)

Sunday, May 12, Meeting for Business at Providence, Noon (Indoors and Zoom, Hybrid\*)

Sunday, May 19, Meeting for Worship: at Providence, 10:00 AM (Indoors and Zoom); at Saylesville, 10:30 AM (Indoors); at Conanicut (Weeden Lane, Jamestown), 9:30 AM (Indoors)

Sunday, May 19, 11:45 AM, Presentation by Detroit Friends Meeting (Zoom)

Friday, June 7, 6:00 PM (to 9:00 PM), Estate/Yard Sale Preview Party, Providence Meetinghouse

Saturday, June 8, 9:00 AM (to 3:00 PM), Estate/Yard Sale, Providence Meetinghouse

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

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**Providence Monthly Meeting for Worship  
with a Concern for Business  
14th of Fourth Month, 2024  
Minutes**

Friends gathered at the Providence meetinghouse at noon with 21 present and four on Zoom.

Presiding clerk Ariana Steele began the period of silent worship by reading the following queries taken from “Questions From the Peacemakers - 15 Quaker queries that silently change the course of history”:

*Am I listening for the Spirit even when the words are foreign to me? Is my own understanding of God enriched by other people’s experiences of the Divine? Am I listening to the voice that tells me I am loved?*

The following announcements were read:

On Saturday, May 4, the Special Events Committee is planning a May Breakfast from 8:00am to 11:00am. This event is for the whole family so children & adults are encouraged to attend. The committee will be asking those attending to pay as led, with suggested amounts being \$7 to \$10 for individuals, \$15 to \$20 for families, and no charge for children under 4 years old. Volunteers are needed, so if you’re willing, contact Bruce Carlsten (carlsteneb@gmail.com) or a member of the committee.

There will be a yard sale on Sixth month 8 featuring items from the estate of the late Carla Dowben, whose family has donated these items to support our Meeting’s work in areas of social justice. Further details will be forthcoming.

The following items of business were brought forward:

1. Property Committee requested permission to overspend this year's budget by an additional \$1,680 in order to enter into an annual contract for lawn care at Saylesville meetinghouse. By paying for the whole mowing season in advance, we would pay 5% less overall. Friends approved.
2. Treasurer Peter Swaszek presented the financial report for the first ten months of the fiscal year. So far, expenses have been higher and contributions lower than the budgeted amount, giving a projected shortfall this year of approximately \$17,000. Friends thanked the Treasurer for his report.
3. Finance Committee brought a revised draft budget for the 2024-2025 fiscal year, which was slightly revised during the meeting. Friends approved the budget as revised.
4. Ministry & Counsel Committee reported that attenders Erin Biebuyck and Dan Potts have asked to be accepted as members of our Meeting, with their daughter Hazel Biebuyck-Potts to be accepted as a junior member. Pierre Morenon, Jules Burrowes, and Paul Graseck met with them as a clearness committee, and Ministry and Counsel has recommended approval of their membership. Friends approved and appointed the clearness committee members to organize an appropriate welcome.

No further business appearing, we closed with a period of silent worship at 1:15 p.m., intending to meet next on the fifth of Fifth month.

Respectfully submitted,

Ariana Steele, Clerk

Rebecca Smith, Recording Clerk

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### **May Breakfast on Saturday May 4**

On Saturday, May 4, the Special Events Committee is planning a May Breakfast from 8:00 AM to 11:00 AM. This event is for the whole family so children and adults are encouraged to attend. The proposed menu will include pancakes, scrambled eggs, sausage, hash brown potatoes, juice, coffee, milk (whole and lactose free), cut up fruit, and gluten free muffins. The committee will be asking those attending to pay as led. Volunteers are needed, so if you're willing, contact Bruce Carlsten ([carlsteneb@gmail.com](mailto:carlsteneb@gmail.com)) or another member of the committee.

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### **Location Change for Conanicut Friends Meeting May 5**

Jamestown Friends will return to the historic Quaker meetinghouse on Weeden Lane in

Jamestown RI on Sunday May 5 for seasonal services (through Oct. 27) held at 9:30 AM. The old Meetinghouse is without handicap access or bathroom facilities (which is why we decamp to Norman Bird Sanctuary's heated, handicap accessible, and bathroomed Mabel's Studio in the winter months). In gentle weather, worship services are often held outside. We look forward to welcoming visitors and traveling Friends. If there are questions, please feel free to contact us directly at 401-787-2730.

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### **Presentation by Detroit Friends Meeting May 19**

At 11:45 AM Sunday May 19, representatives of Detroit Friends Meeting will provide a 20-minute video about the struggles of their meeting to stay active in Detroit. The presentation will be via Zoom on the same link that we use for Meeting for Worship.

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### **Big Estate/Yard Sale Coming June 7 and 8**

*from Rebecca Leuchak*

The family of our dear departed Friend Carla Dowben wished after her passing to donate to our Friends Meeting much of the furniture and household/garden things that she and husband Robert owned. The intended purpose is for these items to be used, along with donations from other very generous Friends, to raise funds to support causes of social justice that reflect the values of our Quaker faith. Donations of sale items so far received have been stored in a Meeting member's garage in anticipation of the sale.

On Saturday, June 8, from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM, we will hold an Estate and Yard Sale at two locations: Furniture, lamps, rugs, etc. - much of it of very fine quality - will be sold at Phebe Howland's garage and driveway area. All other items will be sold at the Providence meetinghouse, with the multi-purpose room designated for high quality estate items including art works, and the downstairs social room dedicated for everyday housewares, tools, toys, games, cookbooks, etc., with (hopefully) live entertainment and refreshments.

We plan to hold a "Friends and friends of Friends Preview Party" the Friday evening before the sale, that is June 7th, from 6:00 to 9:00 PM at the meetinghouse.

We need Friends to help with planning, promotion, prepping and schlepping (with pick-up truck/van), unpacking and pricing, and day-of/on-site refreshments and bake sale, entertainment (open mike), staffing the sale, and post-sale packers and drivers (with pick-up truck/van) to deliver unsold items to local charities.

And if you also have items you wish to donate for the sale - please for the near-term hold onto them at home. That garage stored with stuff is full! The week prior to the sale we will have instructions for where and how you can deliver things you want us to include!

Contact Rebecca Leuchak ([rleuchak@gmail.com](mailto:rleuchak@gmail.com)) if you have things to donate and especially if you wish to volunteer for any of the work roles listed above. We can't do this without your help!

Best - Phebe Howland   Rebecca Leuchak   Ashley Marchesi   Erin Zimmer Strenio  
Zona Douthit   Dede Carlsten

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## **Revised 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 ([dleder1@verizon.net](mailto:dleder1@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, providing 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, contact Dan.

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## **Etiquette at Meeting for Worship**

*from Ministry and Counsel Committee*

Friends are reminded that Meeting for Worship begins when the first worshipper sits down, which may occur before 10:00 AM, and we ask all to respect the silence from that point on.

Years ago we had a carpet in the worship room that muffled sound, but now loud footsteps on the wooden floor can be disruptive to worship. For this reason we ask anyone entering the worship room late to do so as quietly as possible. If you know you're going to be late, you may even want to consider wearing soft sole shoes. The same request applies to children as well.

We realize that total silence during Meeting for Worship is not possible, nor is it even desirable. But out of consideration for other worshippers, we ask that there be no reading, writing, texting, eating, or drinking during Meeting for Worship (unless drinking water is a medical necessity). In fact, we ask you to do only one simple thing, which is...nothing. For some this may not be easy, but please try.

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## **Joys and Sorrows**

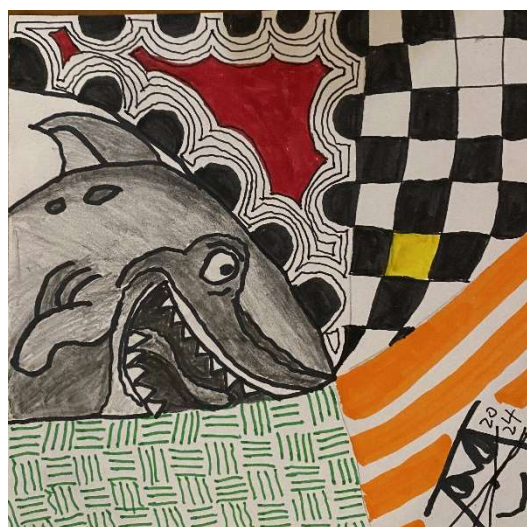
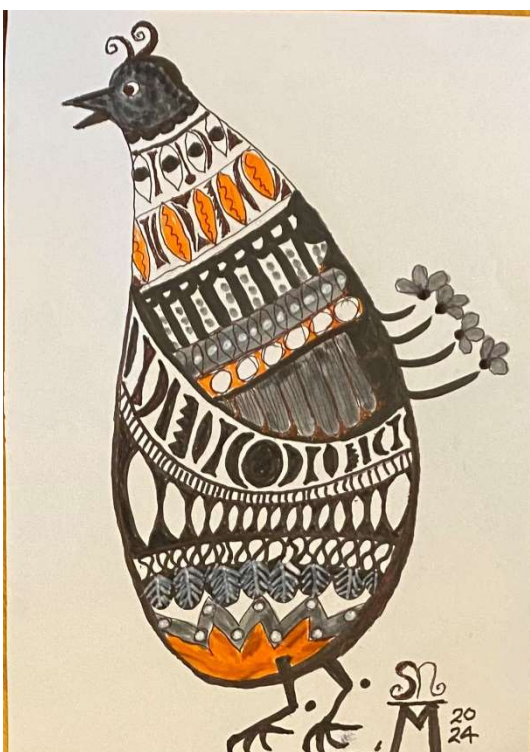
At the urging of Ministry and Counsel Committee, Meeting's newsletter, the Provident Friend, is starting a new feature, a section entitled Joys and Sorrows. If you have a joy to share, or a sorrow or concern, please submit it to the newsletter by sending it to [providentfriend@providencefriends.org](mailto:providentfriend@providencefriends.org) . The hope is that this will promote the ideas that you are not alone, that we are all in this together, and that we are a caring community.

For starters, Laura Landen writes: *My cousin, who is like a brother to me, is in a memory care unit with Alzheimer's. His wife is struggling to adapt to the changes in her life. They live in Columbus, Ohio. Please hold them in the Light.*

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## Art from Sally and Tom Marino

Sally writes: These small doodles are just a few that my husband Tom and I create while we're at cafés during the day. Making them is a wonderfully meditative process that simply happens when pen touches paper, with no specific idea in mind. Tom is an official ZenDoodle teacher ~ he introduced me to this doodling technique. We draw, drink coffee, enjoy the contemplative exercises, then give these drawings away to the baristas and/or others in the café. Both the giving and the receiving bring joy, so this simple act makes double happiness every day. (The image on the left is by Sally, the one on the right by Tom.)



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## Again, a Call for More Art

If you're one of the many folks at Meeting who are engaged in some sort of artistic expression, please consider sending a sample of your work to the newsletter ([providentfriend@providencefriends.org](mailto: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!



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## What Can I Do? Reflections on Our April 4 Worship Sharing

*from Dan Lederer*

On April 4, Ministry and Counsel sponsored a worship sharing asking how Friends can apply our Peace Testimony during these troubled times of war. The focus was on the conflicts in Gaza and Ukraine, where the various proposed solutions are fraught with the potential for adverse outcomes.

These two conflicts are quite different, but they have some common features: First, in both conflicts, and on both sides of each conflict, we see horrible suffering among civilians as well as among the combatants, suffering that we'd all hope to see end. Second, in each case both sides seem to be convinced of the righteousness of their actions, and while some of their rationales may sound more persuasive than others, we wonder whether anything can justify the suffering that we're seeing. And third, in both cases, a ceasefire right now could result in unwanted consequences that have been described in detail by the news media.

Of course, we would all like to see the cessation of hostilities now, and a future of peaceful coexistence in both regions, but during the worship sharing Friends expressed feelings of helplessness and frustration in the face of such intractable situations. We certainly don't want to give way to despair. A few useful suggestions were to:

(1) donate to one of the organizations working to relieve hunger, such as the World Central Kitchen ([www.wck.org](http://www.wck.org)),

(2) write to our Congressional delegation urging them to do all they can to bring about a ceasefire in both areas, and

(3) hold all involved in the Light while at the same time searching for new opportunities to make a difference.

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## **Address for Contributions**

The address for contributions to Meeting is as follows:

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

### **The Provident FRIEND**

Newsletter of  
Providence Monthly Meeting of the  
Religious Society of Friends  
99 Morris Avenue  
Providence, RI 02906  
(401) 331-4218 or <http://providencefriends.org>

### **Providence Monthly Meeting Contact List**

Presiding Clerk: **Ariana Steele** [clerk@providencefriends.org](mailto:clerk@providencefriends.org)  
Assistant Presiding Clerk: **Jules Burrowes**  
Recording Clerk: **Rebecca Smith**  
Treasurer: **Peter Swaszek**  
Ministry & Counsel: **Dan Lederer**  
Pastoral Care Committee: **Zona Douthit**  
Finance: **Zona Douthit**  
Fundraising & Development: **Rebecca Leuchak**  
Peace & Social Action: **Steve Schwartz**  
Hospitality: **Eugenia Marks and Judy Shaw**  
Religious Education: **Eugenia Marks and Wendy Virgadamo**  
Communications: **Dan Lederer**  
Special Events: **Bruce Carlsten**  
Library: **Rebecca Smith**  
Archive: **Dan Lederer**  
Property: **Bob Elliott, Kim Wiegand, and Ann Durant**  
Burial Grounds: **Matt Hackman**  
Providence Meetinghouse Management: **Nina Berry**  
Saylesville Meetinghouse Management: **Bob Watt**  
Newsletter: **Jen McFadden and Dan Lederer**  
[providentfriend@providencefriends.org](mailto:providentfriend@providencefriends.org)

Email list moderator: **Dan Lederer**  
Website: **Sam Schiffman** [webclerk@providencefriends.org](mailto:webclerk@providencefriends.org)  
Moses Brown School Liaison: **Ariana Steele**  
Young Adult Friends: **Nia Thomas**  
Adult Religious Education: **Laura Landen**  
To Schedule the Meetinghouse: **Dan Lederer**  
Questions and Information: **Steve Schwartz** [info@providencefriends.org](mailto:info@providencefriends.org)