

Portland Friends Meeting Newsletter

First Month, 2016

Meeting for Worship: Sundays 10:30a
Wednesdays 5:30p

Adult Education, First Day School: 2nd & 4th Sundays



1837 Forest Ave Portland, ME 04103
portlandfriendsmeeting.org
207-200-6544

Connections

Co-Clerks

Lea Sutton 642-2327
Liz Maier 883-5420

Treasurer, Contributions

Sue Nelson 391-6116
60 Shadagee Road, #2
Saco, ME 04072

Treasurer, Operating Account

Kathy Beach 741-2940
14 Drew Road
South Portland 04106

Treasurer, Special Funds

Sara Jane Elliot 749-9706

Special Needs Funds

Chris Beach 741-2940
Elizabeth Szatkowski 772-1774

Ministry and Council

Lyn Ballou 865-3888
Lea Sutton 642-2327

Pastoral Care Coordinators

Christina Davis 518-0784

Religious Education

Adults: Sandra Jensen, 839-2372
Youth: Sarah Peterson, 504-0974
Youth Religious Education Coordinator:
Anne Payson 781-2501

Use of the Meetinghouse

Dorothy Grannell 878-8698
dorothygrannell@maine.rr.com

e-group Coordinator

Mary Beth Walsh 797-8414
mbwalsh@mainelyaccess.com

Newsletter

submissions
Heather Denkmire
pfmnewsletter@grantwinners.net

address change details

Rich Nagle
wnagle3@gmail.com

"Do you welcome inquirers and visitors to your meeting? Do you encourage their continued attendance and participation? Do you seek to share and to interpret the faith of Friends and to cooperate with others in spreading the Christian message? Are you patterns, examples; do your lives preach among all sorts of people, and to them? Do you walk cheerfully over the world, answering that of God in every one?"

New England Yearly Meeting, 1985 Faith & Practice, III: Advices and Queries

Calendar

- January 12:** 7pm Book discussion group, "The Sustainable Life" 43 Delaware Ct
- January 15-17:** Junior High Yearly Meeting retreat, Westport Monthly Meeting
- January 17:** Rise of Meeting, Worship sharing "Membership"
- January 23:** 9:30-11a Falmouth Quarterly Meeting, Reading of Memorial Minutes at Portland Friends Meeting
- January 24:** 9am, Adult Religious Education, "Elderling"
Rise of Meeting Finger Food Pot Luck,
Earth & Spirit sharing of winter poetry
Friends School of Portland Invited for worship and programs
- January 29-31:** Junior Yearly Meeting retreat, Wellesley Monthly Meeting
- January 30:** All Day, NEYM Committee Day at Friends School of Portland
- January 31:** Rise of Meeting, open meeting of Ad Hoc Committee on Communication
- February 9:** 7pm Open discussion with author Doug Gwyn, "The Sustainable Life," Portland Friends Meeting

Monthly

- Every Sunday:** 10:30a Meeting for Worship
- Every Wednesday:** 5:30p Meeting for Worship
- 1st Thursday:** 4-7p Preble Street Soup Kitchen
Aaayn Foster 766-9762
- 1st Sunday:** 9a Meeting for Worship for the Conduct of Business
- 2nd Saturday:** 5-8p Youngish adults potluck
Bart Czyz, btczyk@gmail.com, 207 899 5937
- 2nd & 4th Sundays:** Adult Religious Education, First Day School

Minutes of Portland Friends Monthly Meeting

January 3, 2016

Portland Friends Meeting gathered in meeting for worship to conduct business on January 3, 2016 at 9 a.m., with 14 members and attenders present. We began in silent worship, during which Co-Clerk Liz Maier read from the 1985 New England Yearly Meeting queries, the Query No. 5 on Outreach, which starts "Do you welcome inquirers and visitors to your Meeting?"

1. **Minutes.** There were no corrections necessary for the December minutes.
2. **Thank you to Andy Grannell.** Co-Clerk Liz Maier thanked Andy for all that he has done for the Meeting serving as Co-Clerk over the past two years. She noted that, although he is laying down the details of the clerkship work, he will still be active as the wise and caring person we all know, always ready to respond when we need him.

3. **Treasurer's Report.** Kathy Beach reported on our 2015 budget year. It ended well, clearing up our early December deficit of almost \$7,000. We finished the month of December with a positive balance of \$2,453 for the month. Expenses for the month were \$2,849, and income was \$9,713. Year-to-date expenses were \$57,897, and income was \$58,047, leaving a positive balance for the year of \$150.

We approved the Treasurer's report. Gratitude was expressed to all those who gave in December.

Quick Summary of Income and Expenses Twelve months — 100% of 2015

Year-to-date Income	\$58,047
Percent of Budget	87%
Year-to-date Expenses	\$57,897
Percent of Budget	87%
Balance	\$150

4. **2016 Budget; Financial Oversight.** Jo Linder presented for approval the Committee's proposed budget for 2016. The budget had been presented in detail at December Meeting for Business, and a copy had appeared in the newsletter since that time. There have been no changes from the original draft. The proposed budget represents minimal change from the 2015 budget.

Questions were raised about the suggested raise in the draw-down of our endowment (being kept at 4% or less), the status of the Martin Luther King Day breakfast or dinner and our local NAACP organization (Andy Grannell will follow up these questions), and fuel expenses (Buildings & Grounds will follow up and report to us within the first quarter). The Treasurer also explained line 18, endowment replenishment. These payments are pursuant to a 30-year loan from the principal of our endowment at the time we renovated the Meetinghouse in the 90s.

We approved the 2016 budget.

Jennifer Frick shared a card to us from the Ramallah Friends School student we sponsor. Her name is Jasmine, and she is grateful for our support. This year she prays for the freedom of Palestine and peace in the world.

5. **Library Report.** Karyl Silken read the Committee's 2015 report. It details the many ways they support our community with our archives, a growing collection of adult and children's books, reviews in the newsletter, and cataloguing of the various books and periodicals. This year they have welcomed new members, including one of our children, Cedar Levin. Friends complimented the committee on how user-friendly and rich in books the library is.
6. **Ministry and Counsel.** Sue Nelson reported for the Committee.
There will be a worship-sharing session about membership at the rise of meeting on Sunday January 17. Queries to guide us will appear in the newsletter.
7. **Friends School Resource Committee** Chris Beach asked in behalf of the Committee that we invite members of the Friends School community--students, parents, faculty-- to worship with us on Sunday January 24. This would include First Day School. We approved the invitation.

Earth and Spirit invites us to stay after the rise of Meeting that day to swap and listen to poems on winter reveling and the gifts of the season. There will be a finger food potluck.

8. **Requests for Committee Reports.** The Clerk reminded Committee clerks that 2015 reports are due and should be turned in to the Clerks as soon as possible. They are needed by Ministry and Counsel Committee to prepare the State of Society Report. Still missing are reports from Buildings and Grounds, Peace and Social Concerns, Earth and Spirit Committees.

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9. **Other.** Dorothy Grannell raised issues which she has been carrying about Meeting communications, within and without our community. We have a web presence which is well managed by volunteers but there are ways that our internal communications with members and attenders could be improved. This is also true of outreach to the broader Quaker and non-Quaker audience. Does the e-group capture all who give their e-mail addresses to us? Would having internet access at the meeting house help with adult and youth religious education, retreats, rentals, visiting committees and Quaker organizations?

Other Friends shared Dorothy's concerns and will contact her to work an ad hoc committee to review communications. We thanked the members of the communications committee for the good work they do. Mary Tracy mentioned work by Ministry and Counsel which is currently in progress. The ad hoc committee will start with soliciting the current communications committee for their ideas for support and improvement. Friends also expressed gratitude to Heather Denkmire for the superb work she does for the newsletter and wanted to make sure she is well supported.

Dorothy also mentioned a meeting of the Ministry and Counsel Committee of Falmouth Quarter on January 30 at 9:30 to consider a memorial minute for a Friend from Brunswick. A member of our Ministry and Counsel Committee will attend.

The Clerk read excerpts from Doug Gwyn's letter to Durham Meeting about Christmas and the New Year. Doug is their pastor. The letter encourages us to keep "the fire burning in our hearts" that is God, and live it as best we can. It sparked thoughts from several Friends as our meeting was ending. Appreciation was expressed for the way this discussion focused us as we readied for entry into Meeting for Worship.

We closed with silent worship at 10:20 a.m. with 23 members and attenders present, purposing to meet again on Sunday February 7, 2016 at 9 a.m., God willing.

Lyn Ballou, Co-Recording Clerk

Worship Sharing at Rise of Meeting on "Membership" — January 17

At the rise of meeting on January 17th, Ministry and Counsel is inviting everybody to a worship sharing session on the topic of membership in the meeting. We hope to have as many perspectives as possible, from those who are just beginning to be interested, to long-time members, and especially those who feel no call to join, even though they contribute valuable time and resources to the meeting.

Below are some possible questions we might ask ourselves

- If many of our most active and involved attenders see no reason to become members, what is membership all about anyway?
- How does membership change one's relationship to the community at Portland Friends, or in the wider world?
- What brings friends to seek membership?
- What keeps friends from seeking membership? Long ago somebody suggested that not becoming a member was the best defense against having to serve on M&C or become clerk!
- Is there a perceived difference in status, ie: rights and privileges for members?
- Does membership have anything to do with spiritual seeking?
- Can you say "I am a Quaker" without formal membership?
- Do members have to be Christian, and what does that mean?



NAACP PORTLAND BRANCH

2016 Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Observance

THE GLOBAL STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM

Friday, January 15

ANNUAL MUSIC & GOSPEL CONCERT

Merrill Auditorium - 7:00 P.M.

General Admission \$12/Day of Show \$17

Tickets at www.porttix.com or Merrill Auditorium Box Office

Saturday, January 16

YOUTH SUMMIT

I Am My Brother's and Sister's Keeper

USM Abromson Community Center - 12:15 P.M.

Participation is Limited

Free Registration Required at bit.ly/MLK-Youth-Summit

Monday, January 18

35TH ANNUAL HOLIDAY CELEBRATION

Holiday Inn by the Bay - 5:00 P.M.

Dinner Program \$60

Children's Program Provided-Donations Welcome

Tickets at bit.ly/MLK-Portland

Wednesday, January 27

FILM & DISCUSSION:

More Than a Month

SPACE Gallery

7:00 P.M. Doors Open/7:30 P.M. Film

Free and Open to the Public

www.space538.org

For more information: call (207) 553-5851 or visit www.naACP.me

Events sponsored in association with:



Library And Archives Committee Report for 2015

Once again, the library committee continues to be thankful for generous donations of books from Meeting members. When donated books are duplicates of books we already have, we set them aside for other Monthly Meetings or for members to help themselves.

We continue to use our computer and printer to keep current our library catalog, which is a printed listing of all the books in the library. It enables members and attenders to look up whether or not we have a certain book, and where in the library it is located. For this we are grateful to former Library Committee member Kristina McCormick, who continues to catalog and enter into the computer new additions. One of our new members, Dennis Redfield, has offered to assist Kristina in cataloging and processing books, as we have had so many donated books which we accepted.

We again are renewing our subscription to "Friends Journal" for use in the library. We will be purchasing 3 copies of Douglas Gwyn's book [A Sustainable Life: Quaker Faith and Practice](#), as a discussion group is forming to study this book on sustaining the earth.

We have held off purchasing new books, partly due to the Meeting's deficit budget. We do intend to buy a soon forthcoming Index to our many Pendle Hill pamphlets, which will make them more accessible.

Also postponed until next year, is a study of our lack of shelf space, due to generous donations. We may be able to get a grant to build new shelves.

A number of new children's books have been added to our Youth section, in an attempt to make it more interesting to our young members.

We published in the November newsletter short reviews of some of our newly processed books. We hope to review more books in the future, to inspire interest in the library.

Library Committee meetings at the rise of Meeting have worked well for the usual work of assessing donated books, and considering new purchases.

Archives activity this year has been quietly gathering documents such as newsletters, for continuing archiving.

We have been grateful for the new energy of our 2 new members for this next year. One of them, Michael Erard, has agreed to clerk the committee for 2016, which will bring new energy and focus, after having the same clerk for at least 5 years.

We are excited to welcome our first Youth member, 9 year old Cedar Levin, to the committee. She has long had an interest in the library, and has written reminder cards to members with long overdue books. We hope to get her input on children's books offered to the library.

Respectfully submitted by:

Karyl Sylken

On behalf of the Library and Archives Committee.

December 20, 2015



What Quaker Meeting Means To Me

by Obie Philbrook

"Harold Burnham has pneumonia." This announcement at meeting this first spring Sunday moved me. In the same fashion of my late father who always addressed his episodic thoughts within the hour of worship as his Dear Friends, I begin my reflection.

Dear Friends, this is what Quaker meeting means to me. Memories, fragrance, hope, tradition, familiarity, and friends. I grew up in the Quaker meeting. It was always a rock for me then and now. My first meeting was soon after my birth in 1970. I attended meeting in a borrowed crib in the far corner of the room where we worship, the corner nearest the cemetery where my father is buried. Of course I cannot recollect my early days of attendance but I sure can share my earliest memories. The meeting looked a lot different in the 70's when I grew up. The room for worship itself had a stage, this would have been to the left as you enter through the double doors. The old door was a big wood door painted white. The stage was where we decorated the Christmas tree with hand made crafts that we created upstairs, not down stairs where the children gather today. The upstairs was divided into two rooms. One room was for young kids like me. The other, the larger one was for older kids, the teens. I was jealous of them because they got to decorate the walls in their classroom with finger paintings. As you walked up the stairs, which used to be situated in the middle of the building, you would notice the antique structures still in their place. The old wooden wheel that was used to partition the meeting between the genders remained overhead. A great big door that if closed separated the upstairs from the down by lying horizontal over the staircase.

However, before you were old enough to go to class you spent your first several years in an adjoining room to the room for worship under the careful eye of Marie Shidzig who always had a peanut butter cookie treat for us. Here we played on a little wooden slide, we played board games and lincoln logs. If we made too much noise Mari's raspy voice said SHHHHH Quiet!

The children utilized the stage in the meeting by celebrating Christmas mostly by entertaining the adults with a clumsy enactment of The Good Samaritan.

Kids entered meeting at a half hour into the service as they do today however we seemed much more mischievous then. Mathew Beal, who was my age and was the adopted son of Connie Beal and myself always seemed to have a difficult time holding in our laughter for one odd reason or another under the watchful eyes of Mary Mohler who took issue with our demeanor. I'll note that one of our favorite subjects of humor was Dick Bowmans addresses to the meeting and his clever three piece plaid attire. These were the days when the Meeting gathered at sunrise on Easter morning at Willard beach with an Easter egg hunt following at the Beals' home in South Portland. The children of the Meeting all had a jolly time finding eggs, or playing red rover under the guidance of Doug Ura-neck. I can see in my memory, on the beach all holding hands, Mathew Beal, Andy and Eliza Booth, Erik Philbrook, Carmen and Aaron Nobel, Ellen Anthony, The Ewell brothers, myself and other nameless faces in my mind.

As I grew into adulthood I traveled wide and far but the Meeting was always constant. I attended The Meeting School, a private Quaker boarding school in Rindge New Hampshire. These were quite possibly the happiest years of my young life. I became aware of and then proud of what it meant for me to be a Friend. I say for me because I am certain that my experience isn't the same experience shared by others and that alone makes the Quaker experience and it's profoundness to each and everybody priceless. The Quaker Meeting was always there for me which I humbly came to realize later in my more recent age. Harold Burnham gave me my annual check ups at his practice in Gorham. He told us about civil disobedience. Walter Clark helped me visit England when I was Thirteen as one of ten children from lincoln middle School that took part in a student exchange program in 1983. Jim Maier counseled me through my first loves breakup. Mike and Sue Nelson treated me with a delightful red snapper dinner at sunset on the island of Oahu where I attended Hawaii Loa College when I was twenty. Mike would later help me get out of a contract I had to join the Army. The Quaker Meeting came to my rescue later after I rejoined the army. Here I learned what it meant to kill people and how I wanted no part of it no matter that the G.I. Bill would allow me to go back to Hawaii to finish my degree. Ultimately, I graduated from USM with a degree in Sociology and put it to use as a teacher in the ninth ward in New Orleans. When I come to Meeting it's like coming home so when I come home, I come to Meeting. I don't recognize all of the faces or even know many names but

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when I look around and I can see Hal, I relish that I am next to wisdom. I see Meg and I feel comforted by her warm childhood songs of my past. I see Tracy Booth and I know I am within an understanding and warm soul who's faith has been tested through her losses.

There are times and faces that I miss at Meeting. Marie's gentle heart and raspy voice, Doug's certain philosophies, mostly my father. I miss the creakiness of his crutch as he hobbled across the floor to his usual chair. Often times I sit by his chair and I think to myself "this is the Bob Philbrook chair". I never told him how enlightening his addresses to us during meeting were. He always made me think, kind of the way Hal makes me think.

I've only once broke the silence of meeting, it was after Marie died and I was listening to the clamor of the children in the other room which moved me enough to say that I missed her.

I guess I believe the silence to be somewhat of a sacred time. As in Faith and practice George Fox "...called them, to sit in silence under the inwardly searchlighting truth which showed up every act or impulse of self will or self righteousness."

"Those who are brought to a pure still waiting upon God in the spirit, are come nearer to the Lord than words are..."

"Words are not essential...the sincere worshiper waits in silent meditation".

Again, as in Faith and practice between the pages of 100-104

"...Though there be not a word spoken, yet is the true spiritual worship performed..." This Holy Obedience can be harmed if one, through their own ego possess an "advanced determination to speak". Let us remember that the basis from which the Quaker movement was formed, that nobody but ourselves could attest to our communion with God but ourselves and our own set of circumstances. This isn't to say that vocal ministry doesn't have it's place in Meeting, in fact it is essential. "...Our vocal ministry has the power to change life. Vocal messages can be as effective in a few halting but spiritually filled words as in the most learned and articulate message given in a meeting for worship" page 105, Faith and Practice, 1985.

My Quaker experience is real but tested at times. When asked what a Quaker is I automatically don't feel qualified to answer but through my own experience and I respond with things like, well, Quakers accept everyone. We seek truth through our life actions, we're Quakers through practice not words and ultimately at times feel as though I am an awful Quaker. Part of this is in my own adaptation to Quaker faith. When I approach the Meeting on Sundays I feel that maybe all wouldn't feel so welcome when the grounds are used politically anti-war sentiment. I wonder how certain individuals would feel if bombarded by such a liberal bunch as we seem to be. I wonder also that in the attempt to embrace everybody through our practice that we actually leave others out, are we a kind of clique? For as long as I have attended meeting, all of my life, I sometimes feel as though I'm not an exact fit. I find myself contemplating getting more involved to get more out of the experience or perhaps donating what I can to sort of legitimize my belonging. I'm unsure how to adapt to my Quaker urges, unsure at times if I want to. I feel proud when I tell people that I'm a Quaker, they find it interesting. I defend Quakerism and felt hurt by a Sociology of Religion professor who referred to my faith as a "bus stop" religion.

Nonetheless, it is here where I find solace. Where I feel connected to something greater than me. Connected also to my father. Perhaps, as I have done in the past I will rest beside his stone and light up a cigarette which is something that I don't normally do but it helps to make me feel more philosophical in my contemplations with him so close. Bob loved this meeting. He was a proud man, so too do I love this meeting and all it means to me.



Eat at the Foreside Tavern on Monday, January 25th and help raise money for Friends School of Portland!

3% of sales all day (11:30am-9pm) will go to FSP. Invite your family, friends and coworkers! The [Foreside Tavern](#) is located at 270 Route One in Falmouth. We hope to see you there!



Alzheimer's Disease: What it is; What's Being Done About it; What it Costs; and What You Can Do.

Thursday, January 28, 2016 at 7:00pm in Friends School of Portland's meeting room.

Presented by FSP board member Perry Clark.

Perry Clark, a retired lawyer, is a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania and the University of Maine School of Law and currently serves as Chair of the External Advisory Board of the Institute on Aging at the University of Pennsylvania. He is also a participant in two aging studies at Boston University. His sister died in 2000 at the age of 57 from early-onset Alzheimer's disease.

We hope you can join us for this free lecture. Friends and family welcome!

Let your Life
Speak

Save the date!

Women's Retreat: March 18 and 19
at the Portland Friends Meetinghouse

Welcome to the Friends School of Portland!

On the morning of January 24 Portland Friends Meeting welcomes the Friends School of Portland community—students, parents, faculty, staff—to our Meeting House.

This is an opportunity for the Friends School families and community to become acquainted with the Meeting community that gave birth to the school.

Please help welcome them!

Portland Friend Meeting Communications

An Ad Hoc Communication Committee is forming to review the big picture as well as the details of PFM's communication within our community and with the outer Quaker and non-Quaker communities. Besides Dorothy, the committee includes Arthur Fink, Ed Robinson, and Mary Tracy. We will want to tap the relevant expertise that PFM folks have. Contact Dorothy Grannell if you have ideas, knowledge, and perspectives to share. (878-8698 dorothygrannell@maine.rr.com)

Biking Cheerfully Over the Nation

Hello Portland Friends Meeting!

We're writing to let you know **we're going for a family bike ride in 2016!** We (Rob, Sarah, and nine-year-old daughter Cedar) will be bicycling **across the country - Delaware to Seattle, or as far as we get!** We'll dip our back wheels in the Atlantic Ocean at Cape Henlopen, Delaware on the morning of April 2. And if we actually make it all the way, we'll put our front wheels in Puget Sound in Seattle, Washington some time in late September. And we hope to answer that of God in everyone we meet along the way.

This has been a dream of ours for the past 10 years or so and we're feeling incredibly fortunate to have the opportunity to do it - and be re-inspired for the work that we do by experiencing our country at a 10-mile-per-hour pace.

[Here's a link to our route](http://ridewithgps.com/routes/11477481) ridewithgps.com/routes/11477481 We'll be journaling online along the way, and we'll let you know when we've set up the website. We'll also send occasional **e-mail updates** - if you would like, please feel free to [sign up for those here](#): eepurl.com/bL1jc1

We're putting the word out early because we have three specific requests for help:

Can you help us **find a tenant for our apartment?** [Here's the Craigslist link](#) to our rental posting - if you can think of anyone to send this to, we'd be most appreciative!

Can you help us **find a home for Cedar's guinea pigs, Polka and Peanut Butter Scotchy?** [Here's a link to some cute pictures and more information](#) - again, we'd love it if you could pass this e-mail on to anyone you think might be interested.

Do you know anyone who lives along our route who might like to put us up for a night or two? We'll be doing lots of camping, but sometimes it's fun to stay with a friend of a friend, especially in cities. You can check out the route itself on the link above, or you can look over this list of some cities and areas through which we hope to pass. Any folks you could connect us with would be lovely!

Delaware – Lewes

Maryland: Annapolis; anywhere along Potomac River upstream from DC

West Virginia: Harpers Ferry, Shepherdstown

Pennsylvania – Pittsburgh, and points south

Ohio – Columbus, Cincinnati

Indiana – Columbus, Nashville, Bloomington (southern Indiana)

Missouri – St. Louis, Columbia, Kansas City

Iowa – Council Bluffs

Nebraska – Omaha

South Dakota – Black Hills

Wyoming – Buffalo, Gillette, Cody

Washington – Spokane, Ellensburg

Thanks so much for giving this some thought and we *send our best wishes to you for this new year that's just beginning!*

Rob, Sarah, and Cedar

P.S. We'll be fairly unplugged for the trip but **until March 31st you can reach us at:**

Rob: rob@roblevin.net - 207-774-8026; Sarah:
sarah@sarahcushman.com - 207-200-1910



Portland Friends Meeting
1837 Forest Ave
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Address Service Requested

Next newsletter deadline:
Thursday, February 11th, 9am

submissions: pfmnewsletter@grantwinners.net

