

Portland Friends Meeting Newsletter

Ninth Month, 2019

Meeting for Worship: 10:30a Sundays

Adult Religious Education: 8:45a 2nd and 4th Sundays

First Day School: 10:45a 2nd and 4th Sundays



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

Connections

Co-Clerks

Dorothy Grannell
stemp41@gmail.com 207-233-6587

Brad Bussiere-Nichols
pfmbrad@gmail.com 207-756-5586

Treasurer, Contributions
Jane Mullen, 215-421-5257
jmmmaine@aol.com

Acting Treasurer, Operating Account
Muriel Allen
murielpfm@gmail.com

Treasurer, Special Funds

Special Needs Funds
Elizabeth Szatkowski 772-1774

Ministry and Counsel
Beth Bussiere-Nichols
Christine Fletcher

Pastoral Care Coordinator
Christina Davis 518-0784

Childcare Coordinator
Susan Grannell 401-413-5951
pfm-nursery-
coordinator@googlegroups.com

Religious Education
Adult: Arthur Fink, convener,
Arthur@arthurfink.net 207-766-5722
Youth: Luke Hankins 207-200-6042
Youth Religious Education Coordinator:
Andy Grannell 207-878-8689
grannell90@gmail.com

Use of the Meetinghouse
Lise Wagner 232-1778
lise.r.wagner@gmail.com

e-group coordinator
pfm.email.list.owner@gmail.com

Newsletter submissions
Heather Denkmire
pfmnewsletter@grantwinners.net

Address change details
Dennis Redfield
dennis.lee.redfield@gmail.com

“How do we reach out to our communities and find those who may not yet know they are looking for us. When they do come through our doors, how do we welcome them fully into our midst, even if it means doing things differently than we have in the past?”

— State of Society Report NEYM August, 2019

Calendar

- September 15:** 10:30a Meeting for Worship at Portland Friends Meeting
10:30a shared Meeting for Worship at Friends School of Portland
Potluck following Worship at Friends School of Portland
- September 17:** Photography Session of Meetinghouse 9 - 4p
(please do not disturb) Jean Schell, photographer, Friends Journal
- September 22:** 8:45a Adult Religious Education resumes
10:30a Meeting for Worship
10:45a Youth Religious Education resumes
- September 22-29:** Family Promise Hosting by Portland Friends Meeting
- Sunday, September 29:** 11:35a-2p Lunch & Session on Extending Our Welcome to the Sidewalk: Do We Move Forward? (Lunch provided.)
- October 6:** 9a Meeting for Worship for the Conduct of Business
World Quaker Day
Rise of Meeting, conversation on New England Yearly Meeting
Epistle, “Provoke One Another to Love”
- October 11-13:** Young Friends Retreat, Framingham Friends Meeting

Monthly

- Every Sunday:** 5p Sundays through 9/1
10:30a beginning Sunday 9/8
- 2nd Saturdays:** 5-8p Youngish adults potluck
Bart Czyz, btczyz@gmail.com, 207 899 5937

Family Open House @ Friends School of Portland Saturday, October 26, 2019 @ 10am-noon

Tour our beautiful Passive House school, meet our teachers, look around the classrooms, and talk to current parents and students. Learn more about Quaker education and get a feel for our culture of joyful learning. Our Head of School and Director of Studies will be on hand to answer your questions. This event is for families with children entering preschool through 8th grade; prospective students and their siblings are welcome! See a list of other upcoming admission events and RSVP here: <https://www.friendschoolportland.org/admissions-events>.



Portland Friends Meeting
Meeting for Business
September 8, 2019

We began in silent worship at 9 a.m. with 28 members and attenders present, during which co-clerk Dorothy Grannell read the following:

“How do we reach out to our communities and find those who may not yet know they are looking for us. When they do come through our doors, how do we welcome them fully into our midst, even if it means doing things differently than we have in the past?”

Query: State of Society Report NEYM August, 2019

1. Minutes We accepted the July 2019 minutes.

2. Treasurer’s Report.

Muriel Allen presented the Treasurer’s report eight months into the year (67%). Our Year-to-Date balance continues to be positive. Here are the numbers:

Year-To-Date:

Income: \$68,428. (higher than usual at this time of year because of January contribution of \$20,000)

Expenses: \$47,134

Balance: \$21,294

The electricity payments are already at 100% of the amount budgeted. Muriel explained that she is in touch with CMP about this, and it may be due to rate increases and more use by our growing number of renters.

Friends accepted the Treasurer’s report.

3. Financial Oversight. Jo Linder appeared for the Committee. She thanked Muriel Allen and Jane Mullen for their work in various treasurer positions while Treasurer Kathy Beach is spending a year in Malawi in Africa.

Loan Request from Friends School of Portland

The Friends School, now starting its 13th year, has enjoyed continuing success and rising enrollments. Its long-range planning includes increased parking and a doubling of classrooms in order to accommodate two classes at each level. Construction of a new parking lot took place this past summer, and groundbreaking for the new middle school classroom wing will take place on October 6. The School has raised 85% of the \$2.25 million needed for this important project. While they do not intend to take out any long-term loan, they do need a bridge loan for construction costs while pledges come in over a 5-year period. They have arranged for a loan from TD Bank of \$850,000 but still need another loan of \$150,000. Friends School of Portland is therefore requesting a loan from Portland Friends Meeting of \$150,000, payable over 7 years with interest at the rate of 3.5%, provided that interest only will be paid during the first two years. Additionally, they ask for forgiveness of interest on our current bridge loan for the School’s original construction (\$2,374.58 as of September 15) in lieu of (or as part of) an outright donation. The Committee recommends that we take these steps.

After discussion, we agreed to the following:

- a loan of \$150,000 to Friends School of Portland with interest at the rate of 3.5 %, payable over 7 years with interest only payable over the first two years.
- Portland Friends Meeting will forgive interest still due on the current loan made to Friends School of Portland as a donation to the School’s capital campaign for construction.

A question was raised about whether we could have a report each year from the school, even though it is not officially under our care. Lise Wagner, who is clerk of its Board, offered to explore this possibility. Another question about whether the charging of interest is consistent with our principles may be taken up by the Committee on Peace and Social Concerns.

Committee budget requests. Each year Financial Oversight starts its work on the next year’s operating budget by asking committees to consider their upcoming needs. Is the amount in the current budget appropriate, or should it be raised or lowered? Please submit your requests by October 20th.

(minutes continued from page 2)

- 4. Renewal of Greater Portland Family Promise contract (“Covenant”).** Judy Spross, volunteer coordinator for Family Promise, reported. She joyfully announced that Mary DaSilva will be joining her as co-coordinator. The next hosting week starts September 22.

The time has come for Portland Friends Meeting to renew its agreement with Greater Portland Family Promise to continue our work with homeless families. Judy read the “Covenant”, a copy of which appears at the end of these minutes.

We approved renewal of the agreement with a couple of minor changes in the document.

A question was raised whether the program has been effective in placing clients in regular housing. Judy reported that approximately 85% have been placed so far.

- 5. Ministry and Counsel.** Christine Fletcher appeared for the committee.

Sojourners Meg Klepack and Jay O’Hara. Christine read letters from Sandwich Monthly Meeting and West Falmouth Preparative Meeting requesting that we welcome as sojourning members these two Friends while Meg performs her 3-year residency in family medicine at Maine Medical Center. Jay has a spirit-led concern and ministry for climate action.

As sojourning members, Jay and Meg will be under our care as all members are. Jay also has two specific long term concerns that are under the care of an accountability committee of West Falmouth Meeting. Those ministries will continue under the care of that committee. As we get to know Jay there may be Portland Friends who join his accountability committee. We accepted Meg Klepack and Jay O’Hara under our care for the next 3 years.

Worship at the Friends School on Sunday September 15 at 10:30. Friends are reminded of our annual joint worship at the Friends School of Portland, 11 U.S. Route 1, Cumberland Foreside, at 10:30 a.m. Worship will be followed by a potluck luncheon, including outdoor seating if the weather favors us. Worship will also take place at the same time at the Meetinghouse.

- 6. Youth Religious Education.** Youth Religious Education Coordinator Andy Grannell brought us up to date on youth activities, and sketched the committee’s plans for this fall. Here is his report:—

Review & Update:

1. Our scholarship award in support of Bradley Iwungu was delivered in person to Bradley in Kakamega by Sukie Rice – founder of the support committee “Friends of Kakamega” sixteen years ago. This program of sponsorship and support has resulted in 100 high school graduates and 25 college & university grads. Along with Bradley, this sponsorship program currently supports 250 students.
2. Our program of supporting families wishing to send their children to Friends-sponsored summer programs made it possible - or so much easier - to attend Friends Camp in South China, George Fox Camp at Friends School of Portland, and New England Yearly Meeting of Friends 359th Annual Sessions held at Castleton University, Castleton, Vermont, August 3-8. We awarded four camperships and received one heartfelt letter of thanks.
3. Two of our recent YREC and NEYM Youth Program graduates have begun their first semesters at Bryn Mawr College (Abby Fortune) and Earlham College (Doug Wagner). Wilder Payson has begun a year of service with AmeriCorps where he serves full-time with a nonprofit.

September Events:

1. Next Sunday at Meeting for Worship, we will welcome returning and new members – youth & parents – to our fall programs. We begin our regularly scheduled twice monthly classes in October offered for preKindergarten led by Susan Grannell, grade school age (“Thunder Quakes”) led by Luke Hankin & Chris Fitze, middle school years led by Liz Maier and Sarah Peterson, and the teen years led by Jonathan Ewell and a person soon to be confirmed.
2. Next weekend at Woolman Hill located in Deerfield, Massachusetts the Junior Yearly Meeting retreats for Quaker children grades 2-6, under Gretchen Baker Smith’s guidance will convene under the theme, “This Little Light’s Not Mine.”
3. YREC Committee members coordinated by Luke Hankins and including Emily Silevinac, Anneke Hohl, Chris Fitze, and Bart Czyz will be meeting to preview staffing both for the teachers who have signed on and those who willingly substitute

(minutes continued from page 3)

as need dictates. We will also review class sizes and those who have moved up to the next grouping appropriate to their grade level and maturity.

We accepted the report.

7. Adult Religious Education. Arthur Fink presented the following report from the Committee:

The Adult Religious Education committee is small and consists of one long term continuing member, one much newer continuing member, and one new member. We really need more people to design and carry out program.

We are not ready to announce a plan for the year. Do expect us to make use of Quaker Speak videos, and know that we are considering repeating the Quaker 101 series. Please let us know if you would be particularly interested in this (or not), by contacting Arthur Fink (arthur@arthurfink.com).

Our first adult class, on September 22, will be about the role of Spirit in Quaker social action. We'll be watching one, or perhaps several, Quaker Speak videos on this subject, and will then enter into worshipful dialog about the process of moving from interest to concern to Spirit-filled action. If you've a particular story that you believe would be helpful to share, please contact Arthur Fink (arthur@arthurfink.com) sometime before this session.

Adult Religious Education meets on the 2nd and 4th Sundays, starting at 8:45 and ending at 5 minutes to 10. We accepted the report and encourage people to join the committee.

8. Newsletter Assistance Request. Co-clerk Dorothy Grannell requested help for Heather Denkmire as follows.

Heather Denkmire, our intrepid newsletter compiler, is requesting assistance from the meeting and one or two individuals for the following tasks. If there is something on this list that you are called to undertake please see either of the co-clerks or Heather.

- Someone to monitor Quaker activities that would be worth sharing in the newsletter and send the items to her, ideally as an unformatted text file;
- Maintain a list of events or as a calendar with URLs and/or articles with info;
- Keep an eye on the masthead/committee names, contact information;
- A person to think about the front page calendar every month and decide what should go on it;
- All of us - ID people to put in profiles, encourage them to do it or remind them to do it;
- Committee members and facilitators share their news as it comes along and get it in final form to Heather

We closed at 10:20 a.m., with 41 members and attenders present, purposing to meet again at 9:00 a.m. on October 6, 2019, God willing.

Respectfully submitted,

Lyn Ballou
Co-Recording Clerk

Portland Friends Meeting Email Lists

Our Meeting has two email lists, sometimes referred to as "google groups." The first list is "PFM Life of the Meeting," for items directly related to Portland Friends Meeting business and/or directly Quaker items. The second is "PFM Wider Community," for **any** items of interest from the PFM community to share, not necessarily directly related to Quakers, including personal invitations or community events.

To send an announcement to PFM Life of the Meeting, email:
pfm-life-of-the-meeting@googlegroups.com.

To send an announcement to PFM Wider Community, email:
pfm-wider-community@googlegroups.com.

For technical support or for any questions related to the lists please feel free to email pfm.email.list.owner@gmail.com.

**Covenant between _____
and
Greater Portland Family Promise**



On behalf of _____, Hereafter 'Host Congregation'), a new host congregation for Greater Portland Family Promise, I understand that we will be accommodating up to 14 guests during our host weeks, and we agree to the following for a period of at least one year:

- 1) To identify two persons, a primary and an assistant coordinator, who will take the lead in coordinating host volunteer activities. These positions should be no less than 1 year commitments, to facilitate consistent communications with volunteers within the congregation. These persons will attend at least two Greater Portland Family Promise Host Coordinator meetings per year.
- 2) The use of our facility for providing overnight hospitality to guests during the weeks prescribed on the annual 'Hosting Calendar', of at least two weeks per year, and no more than six weeks a year. We understand the average congregation typically hosts one week per calendar quarter. The 'Hosting Calendar' is coordinated with each congregation and by mutual agreement only. The Host Congregation dictates the number of weeks they host.
- 3) To provide twin-sized linens for each guest, to include: a fitted and a flat sheet, a pillow with case, and a suitable blanket(s). This bedding is for on-site use only.
- 4) To provide daily meals, to include: an evening meal, light breakfast and supplies for lunch.
Note: Guests can participate in meal preparation and clean-up.
- 5) To participate with representative leaders from your community in two review meetings per year, with Family Promise Board representatives, in an effort to garner feedback about program performance, opportunities for improvement, and any additional feedback necessary for optimal host engagement.
- 6) To promote, support and encourage involvement by persons from the Host Congregation in Greater Portland Family Promise events.
- 7) To consider budgeting annual contributions to support the mission of Greater Portland Family Promise
- 8) To provide volunteers and welcome volunteers from outside the congregation to provide support for guest families from 5:00pm to 7:30am Sunday through Sunday, including two overnight hosts, and at least two (2) but up to six (6) volunteers at a time during those hours.

Greater Portland Family Promise will be responsible for;

- 1) The screening of all prospective guests.
- 2) Case management for all guests
- 3) Crisis management for any issues that arise with guests or in the facility because of the guests' presence
- 4) Daily transportation to and from the host congregations, Monday through Sunday.
 - a. Note: Transportation scheduling may vary according to the needs of the guests. Generally, families will arrive at the host congregations in time for dinner and leave no later than 7:30am.

Greater Portland Family Promise Covenant (cont-)

- 5) Providing a twin-sized bed, for each guest, as well as two twin-sized beds for the overnight hosts.
- 6) Training volunteers, and assistance upon request, including on-call assistance during your host weeks.

Together Greater Portland Family Promise and the Host Congregation agree to:

- 1) Create a loving, encouraging, and welcoming environment for guest families.
- 2) Strive to be culturally sensitive to the various backgrounds of guest families.
- 3) Refrain from proselytizing and to work with other faith traditions in partnership with Greater Portland Family Promise with respect and cooperation.
- 4) Respect the dignity of each guest.
Note: Guest families may be invited to attend activities with the host community including worship services but not required to do so.
- 5) Ensure that volunteers that are trained, screened, and background checked as appropriate.
- 6) Offer privacy, to the best of our ability, for guests within our facilities.

We understand that training sessions for our volunteers are mandated. We accept that the staff of Greater Portland Family Promise will provide training to them so that participating volunteers will understand how best to assist the previously homeless families that are guests in the network.

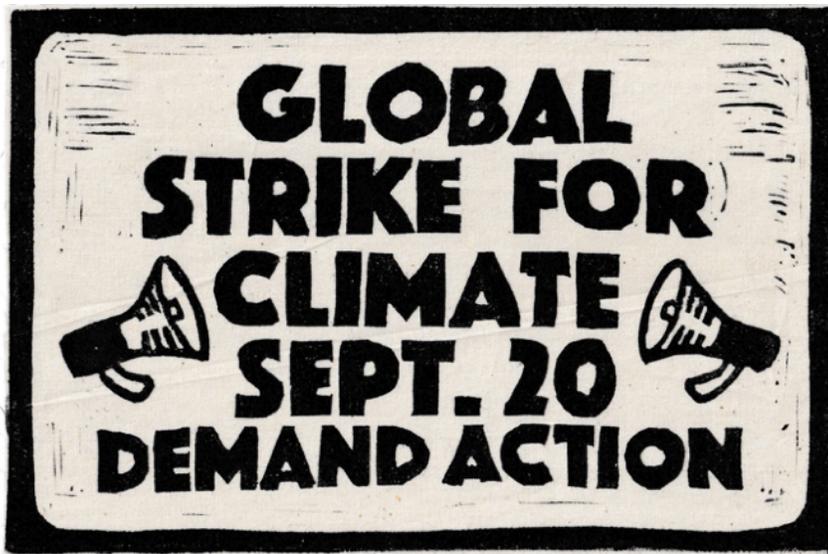
Global Climate Strike

Local action at City Hall in Portland
Friday, September 20, 11:30-1:00 PM

From Amy Eshoo at 350 Maine: *I'm reaching out on behalf of 350 Maine, which as you may know is organizing a Global Climate Strike at Portland City Hall Plaza on Friday, September 20th as part of a week of global climate strikes. We also will be supporting ME Youth Strikes in Bar Harbor and Farmington as well as with adults in Portland. These strikes will be similar to the March 15th youth climate strikes, except now we are also asking adults to walk out of their workplaces and homes alongside youth. We will be sending the message that:*

Business as usual is no longer acceptable!

We know that everyone is feeling the effects of the climate crisis and that this will only get worse. This is why we want to engage as many different work sectors, fields, and groups of people in Maine during these strikes, to represent how we are all affected by the climate crisis, and especially that the climate crisis disproportionately affects those who have contributed the least to it and are denied the tools to adapt to it due to systems of oppression.



We are looking to build a broad coalition of organizations and groups to help us organize the Maine strikes, craft demands for the Portland strike, and show up to actions. We would love to have Portland Friends Meeting with us throughout this process. Will you join us?



I will be celebrating World Quaker Day in Cork City, Ireland but I hope that Portland Friends will find time sometime in the month of October to check out Friends World Committee for Consultation's website on Sustainability <http://fwcc.world/sustainability-resources>. You will find articles there from Friends around the world who are taking action to adapt to and reverse the effects of climate change in their home countries. You will find an article about our own Rob Levin whose story electrified attendees at the meeting of FWCC in Missouri in March.

The theme this year is 'Sustainability: Planting seeds of renewal for the world we love'. There are many resources posted on the World Quaker Day <http://www.worldquakerday.org/> with ideas on how our meeting, individuals and First Day Schools can celebrate and share our work for the planet.

No matter how Friends around the world worship - dancing in Kenya, preaching in Bolivia or silence in Philadelphia - we all share concerns for our planet and believe that we are called to be transformed and to transform the situation around to reflect the power of Love.

Mass Action to Close the Last Large Coal-Fired Power Plant in New England Saturday, September 28 – Time TBD – Bow, NH

- This is shaping up to be the largest climate-focused nonviolent direct action in New England's history.
- A growing group of Maine Quakers (including so far Rob, Muriel, Genna, and Jay from PFM, Andy Burt from Midcoast, and Wendy Schlotterbeck from Durham) will be joining in this civil disobedience action. Quakers and many other people of faith will be joining from the other New England states as well.
- See www.nocoalnoagas.org for more details and to sign up as a participant. There are plenty of roles for those willing to risk arrest as well as those who want to help but cannot risk arrest.
- Visit <https://www.groupcarpool.com/t/dgucyw> to offer or find a ride down. Many people are going down the evening of Friday 9/27 and staying in local churches.
- Talk to Rob if you have questions (rob@roblevin.net)



Join Friends School of Portland on Sunday, October, 6th at 1:00pm as they kick off their community fundraising campaign to build four new classrooms!

There will be food by [Terlingua](#), construction themed drinks and snacks, cider pressing (BYO apples), music and shovels to break ground on the new middle school classrooms. Look forward to seeing you at the festivities and thank you for your support of FSP and Friends education!

Plans for Youth Religious Education Gathering on Sunday, September 22nd at 10:30

Members of the Youth Religious Education Committee invite parents and caretakers of our children and youth to join in worship at 10:30- upstairs followed by a time of getting oriented and reacquainted - downstairs. All members of our community of caring and learning - from infants to high school seniors - are invited for a brief period following worship to get better acquainted and reacquainted.

Parents will have the opportunity to say hello to the teachers, the nursery coordinator, and members of the committee. We will also call out the members of this year's Thunder Quakes (k-2), Middles(3-7) and Teens (8-12).

At the conclusion, I will be asking for family group photos which I will need and use as the year moves into high gear. For those choosing to participate, please know that they will be so helpful in making all of the needed connections that only a photo can offer. Thanks to all who are volunteering their Sunday mornings twice a month so that we can learn about, discuss, and put into action the testimonies of integrity, simplicity, community, equality, and peace.



**NEW ENGLAND
YEARLY MEETING**
— OF FRIENDS —
QUAKERS

JYM Retreat

Sep 13 to Sep 15 • Deerfield, MA

Faith & Practice Revision Committee Meeting

Sep 14 • Dover, NH

Hartford Monthly Meeting Retreat

Sep 20 to Sep 22 • Old Chatham, NY

May We Forever Stand

Sep 20 • Framingham, MA

Sessions Committee Meeting

Sep 21 • Wellesley, MA

Clerking Workshop

Sep 21 • New Haven, CT

United Nations International Day of Peace

Sep 22 • Boston, MA

JHYM Retreat

Sep 27 to Sep 29 • Framingham, MA

Joint Meeting of Permanent Board and Ministry & Counsel

Sep 28 • Amesbury, MA

Betsy Meyer Workshop

Sep 28 • Wellesley, MA

Connecticut Valley Quarter Retreat

Oct 4 to Oct 6 • Deerfield, MA

Young Friends Retreat

Oct 11 to Oct 13 • Framingham, MA

Friends School of Portland looking for aftercare staff and substitutes

If you're looking to be part of a joyful community of learning, please consider working at Friends School of Portland as Aftercare staff or as a substitute.

Aftercare runs Monday-Friday from 3:00-5:30, but please speak with us if there are just certain days and hours that would work for you. Pay ranges from \$14-\$15/hour. Contact Linda Ashe-Ford (linda@friendsschoolofportland.org) or Jenny Rowe (jenny@friendsschoolofportland.org or 558-6212) to apply or learn more.

We need more substitutes to draw on during the school year in preschool through 8th grade classrooms (average class size is 15). You can let us know your general availability and grade preference. Pay is \$55 for a half day, \$100 for a full day. Please contact Jenny Rowe (jenny@friendsschoolofportland.org, or 558-6212).

Provoke One Another to Love

All are invited to gather at Rise of Meeting on October 6 to explore how work at New England Yearly Meeting sessions in August connects to our community conversations here at PFM. The topic for sessions was "Provoke One Another to Love." To facilitate this first gathering we will engage with the 2019 NEYM Epistle. That is the document which is sent out from sessions and strives to share in words the essence of our work together. (Please find 2019 NEYM Epistle on pages 12-13 of this newsletter.)



YOUNG FRIENDS OF NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING

<https://neym.org/young-friends>

Young Friends is the high-school-aged youth group for New England Yearly Meeting of Friends. There are four weekend retreats throughout the school year plus a four-day retreat in the winter. Young Friends has its own program at Annual Sessions, too.



WHAT ARE RETREATS LIKE?

Young Friends retreats are fun, silly, soul-searching, warm, loving, accepting, and transformative. Each retreat has its own theme or topic, chosen by the Young Friends. Most retreats are held at Quaker meetinghouses, and start on Friday night and end around noon on Sunday. Throughout the weekend we sing, play games, spend time in silent worship together, have free time, and enjoy the outdoors. Programs and workshops are led by Resource People, the group of adults who support Young Friends and keep retreats moving. At most retreats we bring sleeping bags to sleep on the floor, and we all help to keep the space clean. We try to abstain from exclusive relationships and use of technology in order to build the loving community we want to live in and be fully present.

HOW MUCH DO RETREATS COST?

Participants pay what they can (between \$0-\$140+ with a suggested fee of \$70). No one will be turned away for lack of funds.

WHAT IF I DON'T KNOW ANYONE?

Come anyway! Young Friends are incredibly welcoming and friendly-- you'll make friends quickly, people will talk to you, and you will have fun. This is not like high school. Seriously!

HOW DO I SIGN UP?

Go to neym.org/young-friends to learn more, watch our new video "Welcome to Young Friends", subscribe to our email list, and register for retreats.

2019-2020 Young Friends Retreats

October 11-13 "Creativity: Move, Make, & Shake in the Spirit" at Framingham Friends Meeting in Framingham, MA

December 6-8 "Food Justice & Sustainability" at Providence Friends Meeting in Providence, RI

Midwinter Retreat: February 14-17 "Taking Care of Ourselves & Each Other" at Woolman Hill in Deerfield, MA

April 17-19 "Gender, Sexuality, & Relationships" at Portland Friends Meeting in Portland, ME

End-of-Year Celebration Retreat: June 12-14 at Allen's Neck Meeting, Dartmouth, MA

Young Friends Program at NEYM Annual Sessions: August 1-6 2020 at Castleton University, Castleton, VT

What happened to the Asylum seekers and efforts to place them?

The statistics are in for the 437 seekers. In addition to the statistics noted here, \$900,000 in donations were received from donors in 266 Maine towns (more than half of four towns). Two PFM attendees became host families as well as one from Durham. Many thanks to all who gave time and clothing and food to serve our new neighbors. A truly amazing outpouring of care and welcome.

Community Response: Emergency Shelter Crisis @Expo MIRC/ACM/COCOME - August 15, 2019

Total Expo Families Placed: 68

GPCOG/Faith Based Orgs Host Homes

Moved	41
Withdrawn	23
CIEE	34
As Needed	19

City Home Placement

Brunswick	10
Lewiston	10
Bath	4
Scarborough	3

Total Apps Received 113

Community Support Staff Team

Community Navigators/ Interpreters – 13 (up to 40 served)

Drivers 2 (up to 4)

Cooks 10 (Up to 30)

Food Coordinator 2 (Expo/Preble)

Office Intern 2 (Bates College; GPCOG)

In-Kind Donation Volunteers over 100 (with 1,400 sq ft storage full of assorted items)

Media Coverage Maine major and local/state station TV, Radio, Newspapers. Boston, NY, BBC, Christian Science, Associated Press, French, Canadian, Al Ja Zeera etc,

Financial Support

More than \$900K City & \$250K – MIRC/ACM/COCOME (Solidarity Fund/MCF/Sewall/ Rocking Moon/ Betterment/ Community Plus Fund

Food Pantry: Preble Street/Wayside/Cultivating Community: 600 daily meals: \$30,000.

Activities/Event

Nickelodeon/Machias Bank movie/popcorn - free screenings of "The Lion King; St Joseph's College Kids Art/Games outing; July 4th Cape Elizabeth Community Picnic ; World Refugee Day Celebrations

Resources and Service Providers

More than 2,000 individuals registered to volunteer United Way; about 200 were vetted; General Assistance (GA) City of Portland; Legal assistance: ILAP; Healthcare: Greater Portland Health; Women & Children: Maine Women, Infants and Children (WIC); Donations: Gateway Community Services/The Root Cellar; Education/Trainings: Portland Public School/ Greater Portland Family Promise/Yarmouth CHI; Host Homes/Transportation Programs: Greater Portland Council of Governments

Culture & Language

Maine Immigrant Rights Coalition; Congolese Community of Maine ; Angolan Community of Maine; City of Portland/ Catholic Charities Maine Immigration & Refugee Services/In Her Presence

Post Expo Immediate Next Steps

Service Provider Taskforce is now creating wraparound services for asylum seekers

- Supporting Host/Expo families in Maine towns
- Case Management (Service Provider) > Transportation > Cultural Navigators (ACM/COM)

Support Families Post Expo In Portland And Other Towns

- Intake Form for expo families
- Transportation : 75 Vols Drivers (16 vetted; Portland, Cape Elizabeth, Gorham, South Portland, Lewiston)
- General Assistance: Food Shopping/Food Pantry

Community Response: Emergency Shelter Crisis @Expo (cont-)

Support Families Post Expo In Portland And Other Towns (cont-)

- School Enrollment (Children/Parents; ESL)
- Healthcare/WIC: Appointments
- Immigration

Current Host Homes Support Team/Lead Person

- Expo Family: Intake Form/Services – Christian Bisimwa (christian.bisimwa@main1.org)
- Host Family Cultural Navigator - Luc Kuanzambi (luc.samuel.kalusivikadioko@gmail.com)
- Host Family Transportation - Manuel Vemba (manuelvemba32@gmail.com)
- Support Team: Sabine Kangombe (sabine.kangombe@main1.org) Tania Lapika (tanialapika1@gmail.com), Manuel Coce (1manuelcoxe@gmail.com)

11 Host Towns

Auburn, 2; Brunswick, 1; Cape Elizabeth, 4; Cumberland Foreside, 1; Falmouth, 3; Freeport, 2; Portland, 17; Saco, 2; So Portland, 2; Westbrook, 1; Yarmouth, 1.

Provide Support And Information To Host And Expo Families

- Develop a resource and FAQ document (**Sara, Baba, Carla, George Tom**)
- Host/Expo family training: (**Sara, Courtney, Baba, Luc, Carla, Christian**)
- Connect host families to new Google group site for a Q&A forum (**Tom, Luc, Carla**)
- Resource and FAQ made available in Lingala, French, and Portuguese
- Connecting families to local congregations/resources, providing info to asylum families (YCHI, Tania, Manuel C)
- Host Home Re-Assign/community navigators to host home (**Carla, Mufalo**)
- CIEE/GPCOG vetted volunteer drivers (**Stephanie**)
- Assign volunteer drivers to host appointments (**Manuel V, Tania**)

Poor People's Campaign

A NATIONAL CALL for MORAL REVIVAL

MAINE

We Must Do MORE
*Mobilizing, Organizing,
Registering, Educating*

NATIONAL TOUR

The Rev. Dr. William J. Barber, II
National Co-Chair,
Poor People's Campaign:
A National Call for Moral Revival
President, Repairers
of the Breach



Rev. Dr. Liz Theoharis
National Co-Chair,
Poor People's Campaign:
A National Call for Moral Revival
Co-Director, Kairos Center

Leading
towards the
Mass Poor People's
Assembly & Moral March
on Washington
June 20, 2020

Registering people for
a movement that
votes!

SAVE THE DATE

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 10 – PORTLAND

MARCH & MASS MEETING
5:45 PM – March
7:00 PM – Mass Meeting

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OF THE BREACH

KAIROS
THE CALL FOR
RACIAL JUSTICE
AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Poor People's Campaign
A NATIONAL CALL for MORAL REVIVAL

For more information, visit poorpeoplescampaign.org

2019 New England Yearly Meeting Epistle

There is a tide in the affairs of men, Which taken at the flood, leads on to fortune. Omitted, all the voyage of their life is bound in shallows and in miseries. On such a full sea are we now afloat. And we must take the current when it serves, or lose our ventures.¹



NEW ENGLAND
YEARLY MEETING
OF FRIENDS
QUAKERS

To Friends Everywhere,

Greetings from the 359th New England Yearly Meeting Annual Sessions. 638 Friends, including 114 youth, have gathered together on Abenaki lands, in a town today called Castleton. The University campus is abuzz with the gifts of summer, reminding us of the joy of this season of hope and renewal. Even as we rejoice in being together, we are acutely aware of the domination culture that appropriated this place many generations ago, and the ongoing oppression, both implicit and explicit, that continues to perpetuate pain among us.

Spirit has led us to begin a process of transforming our yearly meeting while abiding in its programs, structures, and missions. We are actively rebuilding ourselves into a religious society with the good news of liberation at its heart: one that is actively interrupting patterns of domination within and among ourselves and in our sphere of influence. We see this as a process of co-creation that is open-ended in time.

Our attempts at faithfulness to our testimonies and minuted concerns have drawn many Friends from meetings near, and as far away as Kenya, Ramallah, and Bolivia. Some of our sibling meetings are called to participate in our work. We are saddened because our Cuban Friends were again denied visas, preventing them from joining us in person. Yet we have been moved by their video visit.

This year we experimented with new ways of noticing patterns of oppression and faithfulness as they show up within and among us in our time together. Elders joined our clerks table for this purpose. We call each other in, provoking one another to support our corporate and individual spiritual growth, provoking us to love-agape.

As we are able, we adjust our behavior *in real time*. The learning is no longer confined to the mental realm, but is becoming a shared lived experience upon which we can draw strength and wisdom for the journey ahead.

Our plenary speaker, Lisa Graustein, has reframed our work as dismantling Empire. Quoting Margaret Fell, she asked us to “deal plainly” with ourselves. For years we have minuted our standpoints: deploring various institutions, actions, and systemic patterns of Empire, including destruction of our planet; domination of People of Color; the Doctrine of Discovery; domination of queer Friends by discrimination policies; and colonization of people and their cultures. Yet we have not fully or powerfully come under the weight of these minutes--we are stuck in the Empire, and we are the Empire. And the Empire is within us all.

Thus we are called not only to resist the outward Empire, but to liberate ourselves and one another from its bonds to become the fully formed, spirit-infused individuals and community we are called to be.

We are the Friends Margaret Fell wrote to: Convinced, but not yet Crucified. We wade into the deep water, breaking in a great unconformity both outward and inward, trusting that the water will hold us.

The tide is now at the flood. Can we listen, waiting in stillness? And act, in faithfulness?

We recognize that to follow this leading is, ultimately, to choose the ultimate condition of Faithfulness, known in many Christian belief systems as *the Cross*.

Our Bible half-hour presenter Colin Saxton brought us to it. In the words of Brian Drayton,

Living in the Cross means participating in a process of liberation from concerns, feelings, and beliefs that may give us a sense of security, but that also keep us bound and compelled in need and fear.

In a spiritual sense, recovery implies carrying our own Cross to the point of the death of some aspects of ourselves so that God can raise up new Life in us.²

2019 New England Yearly Meeting Epistle (cont-)

We are reminded that to carry the Cross is not only a denial of self, but also a step into the divine wholeness that God calls us into. Living in the Cross means being “absurdly joyful, entirely fearless, and always in trouble.” We long for that place, and know that we as a people are not there yet.

This year we have minuted our affirmation of full inclusion of the ministry of LGBTQ+ Friends, and our concern with the Friends United Meeting personnel policy on sexual ethics. After ten years under a complicated course of action that allowed Monthly Meetings to with-hold contributions to Friends United Meeting, we are no longer in unity on with-holding. The course of action is, therefore, discontinued.

We entered discernment in fear and trembling, reminded of the pain and separation caused by the FUM discussion over these past years. And, while this labor together is not without pain, we found in our meetings together a deep humility and tenderness with one another, a hunger for unity, and a desire to take the tide at this flood.

Empire conquers by dividing those who confront it. As Religious Friends of Truth, we seek within ourselves communion, where differences are transformed and transcended by Love. We hope faithfulness to the truth we have discerned in these sessions right the errors we have made and that we can move forward in a spirit of cocreation, with compassion and care for those who suffer.

Our work has also included the following: We celebrated long standing ministries. We celebrated relationships with Friends in the Great Lakes Region of Africa that have borne fruit in religious education. We celebrated witness on immigration, the Poor People’s Campaign, disarmament, sanctuary, and more. We continued work on revising our *Faith and Practice*, giving preliminary approval to two new chapters. And we continued to labor over faithful response to the conflict in Israel and Palestine and to the climate crisis.

A storm is brewing. A mighty wind blows, shattering our resolve and shaking our foundation. Revelation continues, ungracious and unannounced. A collapse of the past, and a daring glimpse into a future predicated on hope.

We are awakening to new, yet timeless truths, buried beneath old masks; uncovering the past to uproot the present and plant the future in soil anew. The journey is long, the path ill-lit. And we trust in the Light to guide us.

*Truth is one and the same always; and though ages and generations pass away, and one generation goes and another comes, yet the Word, and Power, and Spirit of the living God endures forever, and is the same, and never changes.*³

Faithfully, your Friends of New England Yearly Meeting

Fritz Weiss, Presiding Clerk

1 William Shakespeare, Julius Caesar, Act 4, Scene 5.

2 Brian Drayton, Getting Rooted: Living in the Cross, A Path to Joy and Liberation. Pendle Hill Pamphlet 391 (2007)

3 This quotation, which contains material from Ecclesiastes 1:4-11, is taken from Margaret Askew Fell Fox, The Life of Margaret Fox, Wife of George Fox: Comp. from Her Own Narrative and Other Sources; With a Selection from Her Epistles, Etc. Creative Media Partners, LLC, (2018). P. 81

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<http://www.bible.ca/ef/expository-ecclesiastes-1-4-11.htm>

Portland Friends Meeting
1837 Forest Ave
Portland, ME 04103

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