

Portland Friends Meeting Newsletter

Twelfth Month 2021

Meeting for Worship: 10:45a Sundays



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

Connections

Co-Clerks

Rob Levin

coclerks@portlandfriendsmeeting.org

Lyn Ballou

balloulyn@gmail.com, 207 838-6717

Recording Clerks

PFM.recordingclerk@gmail.com

Treasurer, Contributions

Jane Mullen, 215-421-5257

jmmmaine@aol.com

Treasurer, Operating Account

Kathy Beach, 207-233-2065

katherinegbeach@gmail.com

Treasurer, Special Funds

Special Needs Funds

Elizabeth Szatkowski 207-274-3564

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@gmail.com

Religious Education

Adult: On Hiatus

Youth: Bart Czyz btczyk@gmail.com

Youth Religious Education Coordinator:

Andy Grannell 207-878-8698

grannell90@gmail.com

Use of the Meetinghouse

Lise Wagner 232-1778

lise.r.wagner@gmail.com

e-group membership

pfm.email.list.owner@gmail.com

Newsletter submissions

Heather Denkmire

pfmnewsletter@grantwinners.net

Address/directory changes

directory@portlandfriendsmeeting.org

“What calls us into a Religious Society? Do we grow together in faithfulness?”

—NEYM Faith and Practice

Calendar

December 24 5pm Meeting for Worship with candles, readings, and singing (Zoom)

January 15 Young Friends Midwinter Retreat, Woolman Hill

January 23rd 1p Threshing session on stewardship of resources (Zoom)

Every Month

Every Sunday: 10:45a Meeting for Worship*

First Sundays: 9a Meeting for Worship for the Conduct of Business

Every Wednesday: 7p Young Adult Friends Mid-Week Worship
email yaf@portlandfriendsmeeting.org for location

Second Saturdays: 5-8p Youngish adults potluck
Bart Czyz, btczyk@gmail.com, 207 899 5937

*contact Clerks for online Meeting for Worship links

Touching the Spirit*

“I was one of the first recipients of a Leadings Grant at PFM. My project was to set time aside each month, on a Saturday morning, for as many people as were interested, to create art together. Some weeks we had a few adults, other weeks we had a few families with many age ranges, and sometimes we had the PFM basement full of people, all ready to create mandalas or collages, or to continue with a project they had started at home. I offered these sessions for a year. It was a way for me to touch the Divine. I am a lover of nature, flowers in particular. Their rich color, complexity, and fleeting beauty must be appreciated on the flower's schedule, not mine. This timing keeps me alert and with a sense of anticipation for the next show.” — Kathy Beach



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* See inside for details about this regular newsletter feature.

Portland Friends Meeting
Meeting for Worship for the Conduct of Business
December 5, 2021

We began in silent worship at 9:01 a.m. on December 5th, gathered remotely and connected via Zoom. There were 52 members and attenders present for this meeting.

Our presiding Clerk, Rob Levin, read the query, "What calls us into a Religious Society? Do we grow together in faithfulness?" (NEYM Faith and Practice)

1. Clerk's Comments – The Clerk welcomed all who attended the meeting and gave thanks to the Friend who was holding the Meeting in the Light.

Beginning December 12th there will be a new Meeting for Worship start time of 10:45 to align with the bus schedule.

2. Meetinghouse Use Guidelines – reported by Lyn Ballou

The presiding Clerk asked Friends to see the guidelines not just as a technical set of rules but instead as a road map for how we can love and respect each other so that we may all be more present in Meeting for Worship.

Lyn reviewed the Meetinghouse Use Guidelines with the Meeting. The guidelines are posted on the doors of the meetinghouse and are also available on the website. They will be updated as circumstances evolve. Lyn thanked the Health Advisory Group for all their efforts.

Some friends asked for more clarity on the section of the Guidelines pertaining to families or groups seeking to hold memorial services and similar events, and whether the same rules for Meeting for Worship could apply to these events. The Co Clerks will take this up with the Health Advisory Group.

3. Financial Oversight Committee

Treasurer's Report – reported by Kathy Beach, Treasurer

Summary of Income and Expenses through November 2021:

INCOME:		EXPENSES:	
Donations	\$45,878	Meetinghouse Expenses	\$21,075
Rent	\$1045	Meeting Committees	\$34,176
Endowment	<u>\$11,000</u>	Contributions to Quaker Organizations	<u>\$5,530</u>
Total:	\$57,923	Total:	\$60,781

BALANCE: (\$2858)

The Treasurer reported that, thanks to the generosity of Friends, we are in good financial shape. We currently have a shortfall of \$2,858 but Kathy expressed confidence that Friends will close this gap during the month of December.

Kathy noted that, as of next Sunday, some of us will be meeting in person and that there is a donation box in the foyer for cash and check donations. If you're a Friend who does not deal in cash or checks, and would like to make a donation, please talk with Kathy Beach to see what other arrangements can be made.

Draft 2022 Operating Budget – reported by Jo Linder, Clerk of Financial Oversight

There will be a threshing session around the 2022 budget and the endowment fund on Sunday, January 23rd at 1:00pm via Zoom. More information about the session will be made available over the next few weeks.

Jo shared queries from a Threshing Session held several years ago in the hope that they might assist us as we considered our budget for the coming year.

She reviewed the current draft budget with the Meeting and offered a fuller explanation for some of the items. Jo asked that we please provide any comments or concerns regarding the budget to her by December 15th to give time to share and discuss those with the committee before the end of year.

Jo will also meet with Lise Wagner to discuss the figure for rental income for 2022 as Lise anticipates that there may be some rental income.

(cont-)

(Minutes continued from p.2)

A Friend requested a cost of living increase be added to the draft budget for the Custodial Care of the Meeting and the Nursery Coordinator.

In response to a question, Jo explained that the draft budget does not contain capital expenses. Those items are reported to and approved by Meeting for Business and noted in the Minutes of that meeting. It was asked if it would be possible for Financial Oversight to create a list of our capital expense items to assist Friend's with their discernment around the 2022 Budget and the endowment.

A Friend noted that the percentage of the draft budget allocated to Contributions (8.5%) is quite low, in comparison to our building-related and other internal expenses. We were asked to consider a different framework for our budget where more of our funds are allocated to Contributions to support ministries and organizations outside of the Meeting.

In response to a question, the Clerk noted that the annual operating budget is usually approved at the January Meeting for Business. The Threshing Session in January will be after that date, but we will not necessarily need to wait a year to implement any changes.

Jo and Financial Oversight will offer revisions to the draft budget in response to Friends comments and questions, and an updated draft budget will be in the December newsletter to assist with further discussion and discernment. We will return to this issue in January.

4. Minutes of November 2021 – The minutes from our November Meeting for Business were accepted as printed in the newsletter with the exception of the reference to “pop up” opportunities around social activities and worship which more clearly should have been expressed as opportunities for experimentation. The amended wording is as follows:

- Experimentation opportunities around social activities - Encourage experimenting with small group worship

Closing Worship - Our meeting closed in silent worship at 10:32am, purposing to continue Meeting for Business at Rise of Meeting for Worship.

Meeting for Business for the Conduct of Business - Continued after Rise of Meeting on December 5, 2021:

5. Ministry and Counsel - by Kiya Smith

Joyce Blossom's Transfer of Membership

Ministry and Counsel recommended acceptance of the Certificate of Transfer of the membership of Joyce Blossom from Rockland Friends Meeting, New York to Portland Friends Meeting. The Meeting joyfully accepted the recommendation.

Next Meeting for Worship for the Conduct of Business – Friends purpose to meet again, God willing, at 9:00 a.m. on Sunday, January 2, 2022.

Respectfully submitted,
Patricia Pyle, co-Recording Clerk

Portland Friends Meeting Email Lists

To send a message to either of our two “e-groups,” just join/subscribe.* *Which list should you use for your message?*

PFM Life of the Meeting: items directly related to Portland Friends Meeting business, any Quaker items, *and invitations for everyone in the Meeting to gather* such as invitations for all-Meeting picnics or hikes or worship opportunities. Occasional messages about Members or Attenders also will be shared, as needed. To send a message to this list, email: pfm-life-of-the-meeting@googlegroups.com.

PFM Wider Community, for any items of interest from the PFM community, not necessarily *directly* related to Quakers, though they will certainly be Quaker “adjacent” because we are we. :-). To send a message to this list, email: pfm-wider-community@googlegroups.com.

*To join/subscribe to these email lists/e-groups, simply email pfm.email.list.owner@gmail.com.

MEETINGHOUSE USE GUIDELINES — PORTLAND FRIENDS MEETINGHOUSE

Last Revised: November 28, 2021

Subject to change as conditions allow

- If you feel even the slightest bit unwell, please stay home and join us on zoom. This includes sniffles, runny nose, sore throat, headache. Don't assume it's not covid just because it seems mild. And even if it's just a cold, let's not spread those around, either.
- If you have not already done so and are eligible, please do get vaccinated, including any available boosters. If you are unable to get vaccinated, then you must take an over-the-counter rapid test (available at most pharmacies) and receive a negative result that day prior to entering the building. We will have some rapid tests on hand at the Meetinghouse, which you can take upon arrival while waiting in your car. Contact the Co-Clerks ahead of time to obtain a test, and plan to arrive at least 20 minutes early to take the test.
- Masks are required. We encourage surgical masks (or KN95 or N95) masks over cloth masks, unless your cloth mask has at least double layers and is tight fitting. New research has shown that surgical masks are much more effective than the typical cloth mask, even after multiple uses. We will have a supply of surgical masks available at the entrances to the Meetinghouse.
- For Meeting for Worship and similar Meeting-wide events:
 - For the time being, everyone inside the Meetinghouse must remain masked, regardless of your vaccination status, even while giving a message or announcement (we will have a microphone and speaker available).
 - We will follow social distancing practices as best we can, but for now there will not be any attendance cap or reservation system.
 - Fellowship before and after Meeting for Worship is encouraged, but you must remain masked while indoors. Feel free to unmask when outdoors.
 - For the time being, we will not serve snacks indoors.
- For contract tracing purposes, sign in upon entering the Meetinghouse, on the table by the back door.
- There are five portable air purifiers in the Meetingroom, and we will have them on during Meeting for Worship. Please use them for other meetings and events, and feel free to temporarily remove one from the Meetingroom to another room that you are using for a smaller meeting.
- As weather permits, open windows in any room that you are using, including the bathroom (curtain will block the view). Turn on overhead fan in Meeting room. Keep windows open for at least 20 minutes after use, to replace air flow. But please remember to close windows when you leave.
- To schedule an event, even a small group meeting, be sure to check the Meetinghouse calendar at www.portlandfriendsmeeting.org, and contact Lise Wagner at lise.r.wagner@gmail.com.
- For smaller group meetings: Limit your visit to as few rooms as possible. Please do not hold meetings in the library, as it lacks good ventilation. Consider meeting outside if your group is not fully vaccinated. If everyone in the group is fully vaccinated, you may choose to take off masks and not socially distance.
- For families or groups seeking to hold memorial services and similar events: You may determine what vaccination, masking and social distancing practices to follow, but we ask that you honor the rest of these Guidelines.

Thank you!

Health Advisory Group (Lyn and Rob, Maggie Fiori, Jeff Peterson, Sharon McDonnell)

Questions? Contact Lyn and Rob at coclerks@portlandfriendsmeeting.org

Financial Oversight Committee

Financial Oversight Committee presented the 2022 Budget proposal at Meeting for Business on Sunday, December 5. With gratitude to those who provided input during business meeting, the revised operating budget proposal includes several changes including cost of living increases (COLA) and renaming sections to help reflect where we contribute our resources within our PFM community as well as those resources we share to the wider community. There is one anticipated larger expense that came from Buildings and Grounds Committee and approved earlier this year at the bottom of the page. The attached documents are provided for your reference.

Please send your comments and corrections to me via email: jolinder98@gmail.com, preferably by **December 20**, to allow for time to distribute a final draft of the budget for consideration prior to Meeting for Business in January.

A threshing session on *stewardship of resources* will be held January 23rd at 1 pm via Zoom. The threshing session will provide an opportunity for deeper reflection on several queries that have arisen and are sitting with several in our community. Although decisions are not made at threshing sessions, queries will arise to help guide Quaker processes and decisions.

Hold the date January 15 for a session on "*Gift Economy?*" at Falmouth Quarterly Meeting, being planned by Fritz Weiss and several members of our PFM community. All are welcome to attend.

with gratitude,

Jo Linder, Clerk, Financial Oversight Committee, cell: 207.415.3057 | email: jolinder98@gmail.com

Recipients of Portland Friends Meeting Expenses/Contributions 2021

[City of Portland \(now under Meetinghouse Expenses\)](#) exempts religious organizations from property taxes; PFM chooses to give a donation to the city in lieu of such taxes

[NEYM \(now under Meeting Committee Expenses\)](#) offers youth & young adult programs, the annual Sessions, committee work, adult religious education and inter-visitation programs, and support for Meetings. Additional financial support for NEYM includes youth scholarships & adult scholarships.

[Friends School of Portland \(Maine\)](#) is an independent preschool through 8th grade arising from Quaker faith and practice with which many members/attenders of PFM are involved

[Friends Camp](#) of China, Maine is a co-ed overnight summer camp that offers youth campers creative activities, experience in living our Quaker testimonies, and lots of fun

[American Friends Service Committee](#) is a Quaker organization committed to social justice, peace, and humanitarian service based on Quaker principles

[Friends Committee on National Legislation](#) fields a team of lobbyists to connect Quaker testimonies with peace and social justice issues which need to be addressed

[Falmouth Quarterly Meeting](#) supports Quaker Meetings in southern and western Maine

[Maine Council of Churches](#) an ecumenical community of nine denominations, is a voice and resource in support of the vision of a sustainable, just, and compassionate world

[Quaker Ridge Building Fund](#) helps with the general upkeep of the small, historic Quaker Meeting House in Casco, Maine that is open certain times of the year

[FLGBTQC](#) is a Quaker faith community focusing on the concerns of people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer and offering them inclusion and love

[Ramallah Friends School](#) is a West Bank oasis of peace-making and quality education for both men and women. Founded in 1870 as a direct outreach of Maine Quakers, today its graduates attend the finest colleges here and throughout the world.

[Friends World Committee for Consultation](#) purpose is to encourage fellowship among all branches of the Religious Society of Friends.

[Greater Portland Family Promise](#) Provides "homeless families in the Greater Portland, Maine area with basic human needs—shelter, safety, and sustenance—with a spirit of warmth and hospitality. In the Family Promise model, each host congregation furnishes clean, safe, overnight lodging and nutritious meals for one week, typically on a quarterly basis."

Friends Journal - [Friends Publishing Corporation](#) a Friend and former Board member requests an annual contribution in addition to the library subscription.

[Friends of Kenya Rising](#) (previously Friends of Kakamega) [Kakamega Orphans Care Center](#) Portland Friends Meeting youth have supported Bradley, a student there, for several years. Financial Oversight Committee recommends supplementing the youth fundraising effort for a limited number of years until Bradley completes high school.

[Puente de Amigos](#) Portland Friends Meeting is joining Durham Friends Meeting in a sister relationship with Velasco Friends Church (Iglesia de Los Amigos Cuaqueros) in Velasco, Cuba as a part of the Puente de Amigos (Bridge of Friends) between New England Yearly Meeting and Cuba Yearly Meeting.

[Woolman Hill Quaker Retreat Center](#) a Friend and Woolman Hill Board member requests PFM annual contribution

Web hyperlinks accessed 11.14.2021

Proposed 2022 Budget Draft

Item	2021 Budget	2022 Budget	Notes
Income			
Donations	\$ 64,090	\$ 63,800	financial gifts from individuals
Rent	-	1,000	
Endowment Withdrawal	12,000	18,000	up \$6K
Other			
TOTAL INCOME	76,090	82,800	
Meetinghouse			
Fuel	3,000	3,300	up \$300 for anticipated incr. use
Electricity	1,200	1,320	up \$120, anticipated incr. cost
Water, Sewage, and Stormwater	1,600	1,760	up \$160, anticipate incr. use of PFM
Phone, WiFi	500	1,680	up \$1180 primarily for WiFi connectivity
Insurance/Worker's Compensation	2,500	2,500	
Snow Removal	2,200	1,500	down \$700, only \$180 Dec-Oct, 2021
Buildings & Grounds	5,250	6,250	incr. \$750 for anticipated COVID accomodations, \$1000 for garden (B&G portion);
Cemetery	5,800	4,000	down \$1800 per Committee request; incl. \$1K for garden
Custodial Care of the Meeting	1,700	1,800	up \$100 (COLA 5.9%)
Endowment Loan Repayment (thru 2025)	4,500	4,500	
City of Portland (in lieu of taxes)	500	1,000	up \$500
Subtotal Meetinghouse	28,750	29,610	up \$860
Meeting Community			title change reflects PFM spiritual community
Religious Ed Coordinator	8,000	10,000	increased salary for new hire
Nursery Coordinator	4,160	4,405	up \$245 (COLA 5.9%)
Employee Taxes	1,000	1,100	(up \$100)
First Day Program Expenses	600	600	
Childcare Providers	600	635	up \$35 (COLA 5.9%)
Campership and Youth Scholarships	3,000	3,000	
Adult Religious Ed	-		committee on pause
Adult Scholarships for Friends Activities	1,500	1,500	
Financial Oversight--payroll svc, audit	600	600	
Communications	350	600	up \$250
Velasco Friends Meeting Sister Committee	-	500	new committee with Durham Friends
Library and Records	700	1,500	10-year archive binding project \$1100; books \$400
Ministry and Counsel	350	350	
Clerk's Enrichment	500	500	
Pastoral Care	100	100	
Events/Welcoming	350	350	
Family Promise	1,000	1,000	
Special Needs Fund	2,500	2,000	down \$500 per request
New England Yearly Meeting	16,000	16,000	annual dues
Miscellaneous (& COVID exp.)	500	750	Up \$250 (per co-clerks request for COVID expenses)
Subtotal Meeting Community	41,810	45,490	up \$3690

Touching the Spirit

Hello, friends, art lovers and art makers,

We invite you to send a photo of something you have created, or if you write or love a piece of published writing by another author, send a poem or short text (100 words or so) to me, Mary Tracy. Together, Muriel Allen and I will select one offering each month to put in the newsletter, under the heading of Touching the Spirit. Kids' art and writing welcome!

If you are reading the newsletter as a printed copy, we invite you to view the electronic version available at portlandfriendsmeeting.org to enjoy the full color images!

Questions? Ask Mary Tracy marytracy126@gmail.com or Muriel Allen murielpfm@gmail.com

Financial Oversight Policy

Process for Requesting Capital Funds from Portland Friends Meeting Background:

There are basically three sources of funding to meet expenses at Portland Friends Meeting (PFM).

Cash on hand: This is used for the operating budget. These funds are kept in a checking account and are intended to cover all the expenses that have been identified and approved at the beginning of each fiscal year. This money comes mainly from donations made to the Meeting by members and attenders of PFM.

Endowment Funds: These funds are invested in Friends Fiduciary Corporation, and consist of four separate accounts: Meeting Fund; Barbie Potter Fund; Cemetery Fund; Margaret Jones Youth Fund; Fund-Raising Events

These events are held for special projects when our other sources of funding are not adequate to meet a need.

Funding Policy: It is our general policy to withdraw no more than 4% in total from the endowment accounts each year in order to preserve our capital for future generations. As the members and attenders of Portland Friends Meeting identify expenses above and beyond those paid from the operating budget, we follow a process of discernment so that funds from our endowment are used wisely, a primary aim being to preserve the endowment funds in perpetuity.

Funding Capital Expenses: When a large potential capital expense such as a new boiler, a new roof, or paving of the parking lot is identified, a committee or group of involved members of PFM bring a proposal to the Financial Oversight Committee (FO). A detailed description of the needed funds and a timeline for the project are submitted, and FO then meets to see if the projected expense is feasible. FO examines PFM's resources, analyzes how much money could potentially and prudently be drawn from the endowment funds and how much would need to come from a special fund-raising event or from some other source of funds.

Approval of Capital Expenditures: Once the financial details are worked out within FO, the requestees and FO jointly bring the proposal to PFM monthly business meeting, asking for approval of the plan by all members and attenders who are present at the meeting. Assuming the project is approved, the committee responsible for the project maintains close communication with the Treasurer so that all bills are paid in a timely fashion, drawing on endowment funds and/or specially raised funds in the manner that has been agreed upon.

PFM Meeting for Business approved September 13, 2020 and Published in PFM Newsletter Ninth Month page 9 <https://www.portlandfriendsmeeting.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/20-9th-month.pdf>



NEYM youth ministers Gretchen Baker-Smith and Maggie Fiori would like to invite Friends of all ages from across New England to a day of connecting with each other and Spirit through baking bread together! This is a hybrid gathering, meaning that Friends can participate by gathering in their monthly meeting communities in person and connecting to the wider community online. Gretchen will share her ministry of baking bread as a practice of listening for Spirit, which she has shared with youth for decades. Save the date, March 5th, tell Friends at your meeting, and look out for registration opening this winter. Contact Maggie at maggie@neym.org with questions.



A deep dive into Quaker community for high schoolers

**Young Friends
Midwinter Retreat**
January 15-17 in Deerfield, MA

High school youth who are Quaker or interested in exploring the Quaker way are invited to gather with their peers from around New England at the Young Friends Midwinter Retreat January 15-17th at Woolman Hill in Deerfield, MA. The theme is "Don't postpone joy", and we'll be exploring how we experience the presence of Spirit through cultivating joy in our lives. Learn more here or contact Teen Ministries Coordinator Maggie Fiori at maggie@neym.org. Space is limited- register by December 31st!

Dear Friends,
 It felt special to take part in PFM's last in-person meeting of the year in late November. Sitting in cold silence in community very much left my heart warmed. I look forward to connecting again in the New Year.
 I wanted to pass along the news that Friends School of Portland will be holding a Winter Admissions Open House on January 8th, from 9am-noon. This is a time to tour the school and outdoor campus. Our faculty and staff will also be on hand for tours to meet and chat with. We would love to have families from PFM come. We are still ironing out the details, but for now, [you can sign up to show your interest here](https://forms.gle/hKBbteT4uhjZzAYdA). LINK: (<https://forms.gle/hKBbteT4uhjZzAYdA>)
 Please feel free to pass on the word about this event. I am particularly trying to reach communities that might not have heard of FSP before - if you have any connections that you think could be helpful with this, please reach out to me!
 If you or someone you know is interested in applying, a heads up that the FSP application for the 2022-23 school year will go live on our website this Friday, December 10th. The priority deadline is February 11, 2022. For the full admissions timeline and checklist. [see here](https://www.friendschoolportland.org/admissions-info). LINK: (<https://www.friendschoolportland.org/admissions-info>)
 I wish you and yours a joyful and restful holiday season ahead.
 Kind regards,
 Anna Child, Director of Admissions, Friends School of Portland, child.anna@gmail.com, 410.279.7677 (cell)



Celebrating 15 Years of Joyful Learning



Our local teens and others at the Dover teen meetup

Good news from local Quaker teen meetups: they're a hit!

Adapted from Maggie Fiori & Gretchen Baker-Smith's article in the December 1st youth programs newsletter of New England Yearly Meeting

This just in: local youth meetups aren't just "less good" versions of retreats—they can be a fun and meaningful way to get together with other Quaker teens in addition to retreats! A couple of weeks ago, 12 teens from eastern Mass., including 2 junior-highers, met up with Gretchen, Buddy Baker-Smith, and Mary Ollen (from Friends Camp) at Wellesley Meeting and had a great time eating a delicious Wendyl Ross lunch, making maple-leaf tea, playing games, going on a walk, and reconnecting with friends. It was described as "a love fest."

On the same day and closer to home at Dover Meeting in New Hampshire, 9 Quaker teens from our northeastern part of New England gathered for lots of games, laughs, hot cocoa, learning about Dover as a sanctuary for asylum seekers, and talking about how to work for

migrant justice. Among the crew were Young Friends from Portland and Durham Friends Meetings – including Portland's Zora and Ollie DeSilva, Martin Eller-Fitze, and Cedar Levin. Families were further supported when our teens were able to catch rides and have fun on the way with the wonderful Maine-based staff: Maggie Fiore (Portland Friends), Noel Potter (Friends Camp) and Wendy Schlotterbeck (Durham Friends).

It was clear that these meetups drew teens for whom weekend retreats don't always work. And we heard a resounding "YES!" from everyone who participated when asked if they'd like to do these meetups again. SO, keep your eye out for more local teen meetups in Dover and the Boston area – as well as possibly in Western Mass.

Friends come back from their worship with a new sense of ordination, but not the ordination of human hands. Something has happened in the stillness that makes the heart more tender, more sensitive, more shocked by evil, more dedicated to ideals of life, and more eager to push back the skirts of darkness and to widen the area of light and love.

- Rufus Jones, 1863-1948

The Youth Religious Education Committee (YREC) seeks a new YRE Coordinator to begin in the new year.

The YRE coordinator is the face of the Portland Friends community for families and collaborates closely with the YREC team to provide connections and learning opportunities for the youth of the Meeting and their families.

The position requires, on average, 10 hours per week of commitment and includes compensation. Further details can be found by requesting a job description from Bart, clerk of YREC, at btczyz@gmail.com.



My Quaker Journey: Living as an Ally and a Witness — Diana White

Thank you for the warm welcome to Portland Friends Meeting. I transferred my membership from Farmington last year, after settling in Portland in January 2020. I had been living in Montgomery, Alabama and sojourning at Atlanta Friends Meeting.

Growing up in Absecon, New Jersey, I read my way through the small school library, finding the book that inspired me and set my direction for my life... Up from Slavery, the autobiography of Booker T. Washington. The two important people in my life were my father, Alfred Evans White, and my mother's cousin Betty Banker. My father was a social justice activist who confronted corrupt politicians and the Mafia with humor, charm, and insight. He died when I was a teenager. Betty would not recognize this description, but in today's language she was a nurse entrepreneur and a feminist. From BTW, my father, and Betty, I learned hard work, courage, honor, and to speak truth to power. I come from a matriarchal family with many strong women so there were several role models. I am a third generation nurse and my daughter carries that tradition into the fourth generation.

We were also a proud union family. My father liked to say that he did not know if we were upper lower class or lower middle class. His brother was in the Operating Engineers Union and kept his baseball bat and picket sign handy. I became a social activist, union organizer, and nurse, proud of my roots, with the humor, courage, and commitment to hard work with which I was raised.

I first attended Quaker Meeting as a teen and joined Farmington Friends Meeting in the mid-90's. I was active in Vassalboro Quarterly Meeting and New England Yearly Meeting, serving in various roles including Recording Clerk, Treasurer, and on several committees. I was pleased to find a religious home which was consonant with my values.

Friends Committee on Maine Public Policy was founded by Ed Snyder when he retired from FCNL in the mid-80's. In the transition from his leadership to the next Clerk 20 years later, we engaged in a process to determine if the joint focus on criminal justice and Native American issues was the correct one. Falmouth and Vassalboro Quarters met to take up that question, and after much discussion decided to continue that work, continuing a Quaker commitment of more than 300 years. I clerked FCMPP until I moved to Alabama. We continued the work on problems in the criminal justice system as well as working toward right relationship with Indigenous Peoples.

In 2010 I was happily living in Fort Kent, teaching at UMFK. I felt an emergent leading to commit to working for racial justice in the southern US. I decided to accept a faculty position to which I was recruited at Tuskegee University in Alabama. I am honored to have taught at the school founded by Booker T. Washington. Standing on the campus near the original buildings, built of bricks made by the students and faculty, I always felt that I was standing on holy ground. The School of Nursing was one of the first in the country in an educational setting and has a storied history working for equal opportunity for nursing students. I had many wonderful experiences as a professor there, including the opportunity to work with the faculty at the National Center for Bioethics, founded after President Clinton apologized for the Tuskegee syphilis study. With a friend, we wrote Heartlessness of Dixie, a policy analysis written for a popular audience.

I stayed in Montgomery, Alabama for eight years. I lived and worked almost exclusively with African Americans. I learned that there are places in the US where history is not past, but part of daily life. I saw the segregation and systemic racism entrenched in our institutions. I worked alongside some of the people who have been active since the 1960's, and younger people who carry on the slow work of change. Rev. Robert Graetz, who worked with the African-American community for more than sixty years, described himself as "black on the inside," which is a feeling I share. I was an ally and a witness to their work, as well as a committed member of their community. I continued working in the criminal justice system, supporting the work of federal defense attorneys by consulting and providing expert testimony.

My daughter and her husband, Jen and Kenny Delker, are both in the Air Force. Jen is in the NH Air Guard, a member of the East Coast response team for biological, chemical, and radiologic events. Kenny serves in the AF Reserves Medical Corps and has been deployed three times to Afghanistan and the Middle East in the last 15 years. They also both served long stretches responding to COVID emergencies in the last two years. I am honored and humbled that I have family members who put themselves in danger to protect the public health and care for the ill and wounded here and overseas. They joined the Air Force soon after they were married, because they wanted to make a contribution as others put themselves in harm's way. Both are nurse practitioners in their civilian lives and live in Fayette.

My son Dylan Anderson has been teaching English as a Second Language since he graduated from college. He taught at Ramallah Friends School, and at schools in Bahrain, East Jerusalem, and Amman, Jordan. He has settled in Hargeisa, Somaliland.

I returned from Alabama two years ago because I was ill, and Dylan returned from Hargeisa to care for me. I am recovering from a serious illness and am now doing much better. I am still in touch with friends in Alabama. I miss the people and the culture, but not the weather or the food! I hope to continue the work I was doing there.

Now that I am settled in Portland, I am starting a web-based business to help people make informed decisions about their health and health care. In my nursing career, I supported people on non-traditional healing journeys, and continue to do so as a healer. My healing ministry is under the care of Portland Friends Meeting, with a support committee appointed by Ministry and Counsel. I am particularly interested in helping people with life-threatening illnesses and families facing the death of a family member.

I am not done speaking truth to power... I am concerned with ableism and disability access because I have been disabled for six years. I also carry a concern I have worked on for more than 20 years, the ways in which Quakers align funds management with their spiritual principles and with the testimonies.

PFM Cemetery Report for 2021, submitted by Andy Grannell

(1) **Hired & coordinated with a lawncare professional** (April 22) The Cemetery Committee met with Treese Kliick owner and operator of Prado Gardens at the Meetinghouse to review her detailed bid for our PFM seasonal lawn care. We met and covered all the following: (1) her detailed bid for one season, i.e., 13 weeks starting in May ending in September of 2021 (2) with biweekly cutting of cemetery, oval, & side lawns at a total cost for the season = \$1750. We hired Treese Kliick and were well pleased.

(2) **Provided Support** for the selection and preparation of a burial site for Arthur Fink (April 23)

(3) **Completed trimming surrounding trees: Wayne Cobb** (May) Cost for our part of Lucas tree trimming - \$1,250; we conclude by thanking Wayne Cobb for his critical, timely, and expert service offered to our community; the work of the committee in the future will be benefitting from your contributions.

(4) **Installed** Anne Harwood's memorial monument (July 24)

(5) **Consulted** with family of Virginia Cobb Thibodeaux (Sept 8)

(6) **Prepared & approved a "Policy for Green Burial"** (October) Following a two-month moratorium and after much consideration, we have made arrangements with Chris Stilkey of D.C. Stilkey & Son of to conduct our green burials for the foreseeable future. We have a high degree of confidence in the capabilities.

Policy on Green Burials

(i) Immediately following the passing of a person with a contracted-for plot in our cemetery, loved ones of the deceased will contact a licensed funeral home and the Clerk of the PFM Cemetery Committee.

(ii) The bereaved will notify the funeral home that the burial will happen at our cemetery (1837 Forest Avenue, Portland), and instruct them to contact D. C. Stilkey & Son (207-865-3940) to engage them in performing the burial.

(iii) The bereaved will inform the funeral home as to whether the grave is to be excavated by hand or by mechanized equipment (fees shown below).

(iv) The funeral home will manage the timely handling of remains and will assist loved ones in their choice of a proper container.

(v) Upon notification of passing, the Cemetery Committee will clearly mark the burial plot (with prior consent of the contractee or their family, if possible). The Committee will strive to have one or more of its members, or a designee from Portland Friends, present for the burial to represent the Portland Friends community.

(vi) After D. C. Stilkey & Son has been contacted by the funeral home, their staff will be at the cemetery at an agreed-upon day and time to receive the remains, excavate and cover the grave, and perform any other necessary details.

Details and Fees

(i) Several types of containers are available for green burials including wicker, seagrass, and bamboo. A burial container is now mandatory, as we are no longer accepting remains contained only by shrouds. The container can be provided by the funeral home.

(ii) D. C. Stilkey & Son has committed to performing the burial within forty-eight business hours after passing for a hand-dug grave, 96 hours for machine-dug. This may necessitate refrigeration in some cases, which can be arranged by the funeral home.

(iii) Stilkey's current fees are \$800 for a machine-dug burial and \$1,400 for one that is hand-dug. In either case, they add an administrative fee of \$175 to this amount. These fees are billed by and paid to the funeral home. According to Stilkey, atypical fee for a funeral home's services (not including the for the cemetery plot and for Stilkey's work) is approximately \$3,500. We welcome your questions or concerns.

(7) **Hosting two "Love Our Meeting House" Days:** Doug Malcolm On Saturday, November 6th, from 9-noon, twenty of us to rake the first covering of leaves and to tackle a number of upgrades on the building. Following we sat in a sunny area enjoying a hearty lunch and good conversations. Our thanks to Doug Malcolm for his attention to detail, long hours, and spirited energies. We are in your debt.

(8) **Plotting New Dedicated Cremains Area:** Bob Massengale In close consultation with Bob Spivey's 2019 resurvey of the cemetery, Bob Massengale using a high-tech computer program (CAD LT) to lay out thirty-seven cremains plots in two long rows along the eastern fence line. These cremains plots are marked by aluminum markers purchased from Berntsen. Our thanks for fitting this into a very demanding schedule and for sharing your special expertise.

Advent Gardens – 2021

“No one warned me how beautiful and stirring it would be.”
Andy Grannell, Youth Religious Education Coordinator



Thanks to great teamwork and good weather, this year we were able to keep this tradition alive for all to enjoy. Chris Fitze counted thirty-five candles deposited along the spiral and he did a rough count that put total attendance at 50-55.

There was just enough light to make navigating safe. We used battery powered candles to light the pathway back to the spiral. Jonathan and Isaiah Ewell were a big help. They strung and lighted a string of Christmas lights around the driveway. Teens aided the little ones. Several adults – drawn to the beauty - joined in navigating the spiral.

Doug Malcolm used the FSP stove to heat the cider, while Sue Calhoun, and Brooke Burkett supplied us with cookies. Bill Diffenderfer came early to help with the set up and stayed to the end. Bart Czyz got the two pit fires going. Clustered around the fire pits conversations - toasted with hot cider - were the order of the evening.



Good to have Anne Payson there sporting her cane as her rehab continues. Mettie and Nipper said that this was wonderful opportunity for them. And good to have a FSP family join in.

Fires in both pits doused, candles snuffed, cookies wiped out, by 6:00 the now chilled remnant were ready to call it a wrap. FSP will now put the garland to further good use.

Sara Primo's (our new FSP - Head of School) summed it up for us,

“No one properly warned me about the advent garden. Which is to say: no one warned me about how beautiful and stirring it would be! I should have packed more tissues in my coat pockets for my tears -- it was so lovely, both to see the children participating and then also the elders. Yesterday evening left me with images that will sustain me through the winter.

Thank you for the intrepid plan and for attending to all those details so lovingly!”



Member Profile: Joyce Blossom

I was brought up outside of Philadelphia and was a birthright member of Middletown Friends Meeting, Lima Pa. Both sets of grandparents and aunts and uncles were members there. My kids would joke later that everyone there was a Stanton or a Stratton, my mother's side or my father's side respectively. My mother was a Palmer, her father married a Stanton. I remember the First day school and socials very well. My parents hosted square dances for the meeting at our house, which were fun for my sister and me when the men picked us up and swung us around.

My spiritual journey developed quite naturally in the meeting for worship when we kids would go in for the last 15 minutes or so and in the First Day School. From the beginning I liked the form of worship of Quakers, it's all I knew of course, but it fit me and I have chosen to remain a Friend, transferring my membership when I moved to other places and now to Portland. The ways of looking at things which were shared with me and which I absorbed from the lifestyle of my family, my mother and my maternal grandfather especially are still a part of me. The important things for me have been the direct experience of a higher spiritual dimension, the lack of the necessity for trained ministers or the Bible to know God's (Spirit's) will or presence and the importance of simplicity and pacifism. I went to Westtown School in grade school and absorbed some Quakerism there I'm sure, as well as some Bible stories from my third-grade teacher. Most of my relatives in my parents' and grandparents' generations had gone to Westtown and incidentally they all spoke in the plain language using thee and thy. So, my background, going back to England, and my upbringing was Quaker.

As a child I took my meditation and way of worship out into nature when we moved farther north and west of the Westtown area to a farm, where I spent a lot of time outdoors walking, playing in the stream, exploring the woods and riding our horses.

After college I moved to Baltimore. Alan Brick was an AFSC field secretary there at the time and I joined anti-Vietnam war and civil rights protests. The next year in New York City I attended and then joined Morningside Meeting on the Columbia University campus and was part of an energetic group of young people who started a midweek meeting, a weekly encounter group and worked in anti-war activities, such as taking medical supplies for both sides of the Vietnam war to Canada, as well as serving on committees of the meeting.

In NY I completed master's degrees in nursing and psychology, got married, had my first child and started my career in the mental health field. I worked in the hospital and in clinics, taught Psychiatric Nursing and trained for four years at an institute for psychotherapy and marriage counseling which I practiced on the Upper West Side of Manhattan.

I met my husband Bill Blossom at the Cathedral School of the Cathedral St John the Divine (Episcopal) where we were both single parents of students there and my daughter was a chorister. Bill was a bassist in the New York Philharmonic and had come to NY in 1975.

After my 24 years in Manhattan and Bill's shorter time, we moved to Rockland County north of the city for 24 years. There I joined and Bill attended, Rockland Meeting. Our daughters joined the meeting and had good friends in the Firstday school which I taught when they were teenagers.

After I retired, while in Rockland County, I enjoyed teaching English to Central American immigrants and leading a support group for Mothers and Infants as a volunteer. When Bill retired after 40 years in the New York Philharmonic, we moved to Maine. We both loved Maine and had come to the Bar Harbor area since 1985 when Bill started playing in the Arcady Music Festival in the summers. I also came up to Portland a lot to help my oldest with her kids when she was in law school.

Being a parent has been one of my greatest joys and I treasure our blended family of the two from our first marriages and our two together and all of their spouses. The blessing of 7 grandchildren is marred only by the inability to travel to Copenhagen due to the pandemic where our youngest lives. She completed her PhD in Marine Science there and our first completed hers in Child Language at the University of Kansas and now lives in Vermont.

When we moved here year- round I started coming to Portland Meeting at first sporadically and then regularly. The meeting seemed very large at first. I have benefitted from small groups on Zoom, discussions of anti-racism, Wabanaki Reach programs and book groups. The welcoming committee efforts were helpful and by late summer this year I felt spiritually that I wanted to join the meeting.

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Address Service Requested

Next newsletter deadline:
Tuesday, January 4, 11:59pm

submissions: pfmnewsletter@grantwinners.net

