

Portland Friends Meeting Newsletter

Third Month 2022

Meeting for Worship: 10:45a Sundays



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portlandfriendsmeeting.org
207-200-6544

Connections

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Religious Education

Adult: On Hiatus

Youth: Bart Czyz btczyk@gmail.com

Youth Religious Education Coordinator:

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Use of the Meetinghouse

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Newsletter submissions

Heather Denkmire

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Address/directory changes

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“Queries in the time of Ukraine:

How does your personal faith life better enable you to live in dangerous times?

How does it move you to mend the world?

“How do your spiritual beliefs empower you to help guide the vessel of the world and its people in a good and safe direction?”

What is the difference between being anti-war vs. being FOR peace?”

—*Hope and Witness in Dangerous Times: Lessons from the Quakers on Blending Faith, Daily Life, and Activism* by J. Brent Bill

Calendar

March 27 1p Meeting Resources Discernment Session

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

SAVE THE DATE! Green Dot LA will be doing a free bystander intervention training for Portland Friends using Zoom on Wednesday, March 30, 2022 from 6:00 – 8:00 pm.

Here is how Green Dot describes their work: “Have you ever seen or heard someone harass or bully another person, and wished you knew what to say or do? Most of us have. We are much more likely to be a bystander than either a participant or a victim of hateful and hurtful words and behavior. Green Dot teaches safe and proven-effective Bystander Intervention techniques that every member of a community can use, both proactively to change our culture for the better and reactively to minimize harm. None of us can do everything, but each of us can do our part to make their community safer and more welcoming.”

Green Dot Bystander Intervention was brought to Lewiston-Auburn by Community of Kindness. You can find more information about their work and history on their website: <https://www.greendotla.org>

Peggy Rotundo (a Portland Friend) and I, Sue Reilly, have taken their workshop and been very impressed. Please let us know if you would like to be involved or know more.

To register, go to <https://www.greendotla.org/schedule/form/portland-friends-overview-march> Thank you and hope to see you there.

Portland Friends Meeting
Meeting for Worship for the Conduct of Business
March 7, 2022

We began in silent worship at 9:00 a.m., gathered remotely and connected via Zoom. There were 52 members and attenders present for this meeting.

Presiding Clerk, Lyn Ballou read the following:

Queries in the time of Ukraine:
How does your personal faith life better enable you to live in dangerous times?
How does it move you to mend the world?
"How do your spiritual beliefs empower you to help guide the vessel of the world and its people in a good and safe direction?"

What is the difference between being anti-war vs. being FOR peace?

-- Hope and Witness in Dangerous Times: Lessons from the Quakers on Blending Faith, Daily Life, and Activism by J. Brent Bill.

1. Clerk's comments:

Kiya Smith is holding us in the Light

Peter Woodrow is recording

Luke Hankins is tech assistant

We were reminded that there will be hybrid Meeting for Business and Meeting for Worship on April 3.

2. Approval of Minutes

The revised January minutes were approved as circulated.

The February minutes were approved as circulated.

3. Ministry and Counsel

a. State of Society Report 2021

The draft State of Society report had been read during the February meeting for business and feedback received. One change was made in the second to last paragraph to indicate that we are praying to receive the nourishment we need each day.

Friends approved the State of Society Report for 2021 with appreciation for Beth Bussiere-Nichols and Maggie Fiori for drafting it.

b. Membership Transfer of Kristina Famolare

The transfer of membership of Kristina Famolare from Plymouth Friends Meeting in Pennsylvania was approved.

c. Memorial Minute for Arthur Fink

Fritz Weiss read the minute that had been prepared for our dear member Arthur Fink.

The memorial minute for Arthur Fink was approved and will be forwarded to Falmouth Quarter and New England Yearly Meeting.

d. Welcoming Families and Children

Lyn read a communication about children and families in the meeting, from Youth Religious Education Committee and Ministry and Counsel welcoming families and their children back to the meetinghouse every Sunday for worship and child care for those over two years old. See the full report from Emily Troll.

4. Steering Committee/Stewardship of our Resources—Emily Troll

(Minutes continued from p.2)

A document was distributed before the business meeting that synthesizes the issues and concerns that the committee has heard so far, from the January 23rd threshing session and other listening processes. The committee is proposing a series of sessions to explore important topics raised in relation to the purpose of the meeting community and how those are reflected in how we steward the meeting's resources, financial and otherwise. A first session is planned for March 27th at 1pm with Emily Troll and Peter Woodrow facilitating. Additional (tentative) dates: April 24 and May 22.

Members of the Steering Committee were introduced. An email address is available for communicating with the committee: pfm.discern.steering.committee@gmail.com

5. **Renewal of Commitment to Abolition: Elimination of All Nuclear Weapons**

Andy Grannell reminded Friends of the actions taken by the Meeting in 2000, suggesting that it is time to renew this commitment, especially in light of current threats to peace. Our member, Jim Maier has represented PFM in Physicians for Social Responsibility for many years—the group that is organizing the “Back from the Brink” campaign. [See documents circulated.] Andy reported on a meeting last week with Senator Angus King on these issues, finding him a sensitive and wise listener. Andy observed that it is important to humanize, not demonize, those who threaten use of nuclear weapons and take other warlike actions.

It was noted that there is a major treaty before the UN that is close to approval by member countries. There are useful resource people within NEYM who might be invited to come and make a presentation to us on these issues. The suggestion was also heard that we broaden the concern beyond PSR to join other efforts working towards the same ends. Friends noted that Andy is carrying this concern for the Meeting, and Jim Maier has been active in the Maine chapter of PSR for many years and will continue.

Portland Friends Meeting renews its commitment to seek the complete elimination of all nuclear weapons. We endorse the 2022 “Back from the Brink” campaign and will join the coalition lead by Physicians for Social Responsibility and ask Andy Grannell to represent PFM in the Maine coalition. We also encourage Friends to explore other efforts with similar aims. Further, we request that members be kept apprised of the campaign and other efforts through the *PFM Newsletter* and *PFM – Email*.

6. Velasco Sister Meeting Committee: trip to Cuba

Fritz Weiss reported for the Velasco Sister Meeting Committee. Durham and PFM are jointly sister meetings with Velasco Friends Church. We are invited to join a delegation in November, and the meeting is being asked to endorse the delegation in order to support the ongoing arrangements. While some information has come forward, many details remain unknown and will emerge over the coming months. For previous delegations, different meetings have handled expenses in a variety of ways. Often efforts have been made to ensure that no one who is clear to go is restricted due to lack of funds—so PFM might be asked to provide financial support.

While there are many questions unanswered, we need to ask how we are called to visit Friends in Cuba, assuming that there will be “enough,” in a Spirit of Abundance.

Portland Friends Meeting endorses the project of a trip to Cuba to include visitation with Friends in Velasco Church, our sister meeting. The Velasco Sister Meeting Committee is encouraged to continue to explore arrangements for the delegation and to bring a further detailed proposal back to the meeting for approval, including consideration of forms of support that will be needed and consideration of any financial commitments, in consultation with Financial Oversight.

As the delegation goes forward, additional steps are anticipated, including organizing a clearness process for each prospective member; providing spiritual and logistical support; considering financial support; and holding the delegation in the Light during their trip.

(Minutes continued from p.3)

7. Rising Concerns: deferred. Contact the co-clerks

8. Announcements

- Opportunity for a Green Dot Bystander Training on March 30, 6-8. See email announcement from Sue Reilly.
- LD1626 Lobby Day Wednesday March 9th. See various emails.
- Jay O'Hara Preliminary Hearing will be March 8th—see Fritz Weiss or Jessica Eller if you are interested in attending.
- Faithfulness groups: invitation to go out. There are ten active groups, opportunity for people to join one.

Closing worship

We ended at about 10:35, purposing to meet again, God willing, at 9:00 a.m. on Sunday, April 3, 2022.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Woodrow, Substitute Recording Clerk

Minute from sister meeting committee

Portland and Durham have been invited to send a delegation to Cuba this November to join in Cuba Yearly Meeting's birthday celebration and to visit with our sister meeting in Velasco. We are asking Durham and Portland to approve forming and supporting this delegation. This endorsement is a first, and necessary step to accepting the invitation.

This would mean that the meetings name clearness committees for each individual who considers joining the committee, provide spiritual and logistical support as the delegation prepares for the journey, and provide financial support. And it would mean holding the delegation in prayer during the visit.

The experience of meetings in New England that have sent delegations has been incredibly rich. This is a wonderful opportunity for Portland and Durham.

This is what we know now:

- Travelers to Cuba travel as representatives from NEYM to CYM on a religious visa, Cuban Friends will need to obtain these visas for the delegation in Havana, which takes as long as three months from the time of application.
- The delegation will carry enough funds in Euros to cover all costs of hospitality and to contribute to the CYM funds supporting intervisitation
- The process of approval of individuals for travel includes a clearness committee and endorsement by the monthly meeting, clearness and endorsement by the YM Puente committee, and approval by the Permanent Board. Once this happens, Cuba will issue formal invitations. This is required for the visas.
- A rule of thumb is that at least 1 in 3 travelers should be fluent in Spanish.
- In Cuba the delegation will be fully hosted by Cuban Quakers; they will arrange for lodging and food and travel arrangements and itinerary.

This is what we do not know:

- The specific dates of the trip – at some point the Directiva of Cuba Yearly Meeting will set dates for the celebration. The celebration is usually in mid-November
- The costs of travel – both to get to Cuba and back and in-country travel. The delegation which just left ended up needing significantly more than previous delegations in part because the Cuba currency reforms have eliminated the dual currency in Cuba, and in part because the economic situation in Cuba is so dire. Right now there are no direct flights from the US to Cuba so the delegation needed to go through a charter company in Canada.
- The size of the delegation that Cuba will be able to host. We expect that no more than 8 can travel; but eventually Cuba will let us know.

State of Society 2021

A Rough Draft Year

Last year as the pandemic continued, we gathered to listen to God in new ways. Spirit is alive and singing amongst us, sometimes by its joyful presence, or too often by the sensation of its absence. We know that to be a community of faith is to piece together glimpses of God that each of us receives until together we see the whole, and this is hard to do right now. It is hard to see God's whole vision for us when we cannot find a way that we can gather all together that works for every person. Sometimes, finding ways to be together as one and feel Spirit's presence takes so much creativity and energy and hope that we get tired or lonely, and we forget our unconditional belovedness.

Sometimes Spirit's presence (or our awareness of it) flows with ease and grace, even while the pandemic continues to surprise and disappoint us. Hope rose through the spring that vaccination would open the door to join together again in our Meetinghouse as a gathering of Faith. Our opportunities for whole meeting worship on zoom made us grateful to be able to hold worship during the pandemic for those able to be there, and sometimes Spirit would burst forth through the computer screen. We experimented with hybrid worship, but found that there was not life in it for us. This fall we had the gift of outdoor intergenerational worship and fellowship gatherings at Friends School of Portland. We were grateful for the chance to be with so many families that we have missed for the last few challenging years. The trees swayed and the clouds sashayed with joy. Some of us found just what our hearts needed in the sanctuary of a small group, often in person, like faithfulness groups or a weekday worship or a spontaneous opportunity for fellowship, where we could nurture fresh connections with each other and the Divine. Too many of us have not been able to find a way to be present with our community and this pains us.

As the cold weather arrived, we moved to zoom for first Sundays with the whole community invited to worship together to do business and to be in waiting worship. We are experimenting with nurturing new fluid small gatherings, hoping to build new connections even as we are separated.

Spirit nudges us to continue to engage in big questions even in these times when it can feel hard to hold the center. We are not yet sure what these questions are but we're working on finding them. We feel invited to explore: What is our purpose as a community? What is our role in the wider community? What is our responsibility to our neighbors? Two examples are our work with Family Promise helping to provide support for our neighbors in need of housing, and another is advocating for sovereignty for our Wabanaki neighbors.

We are doing hard work on an empty belly. We are hungry for connection. We pray and are blessed with manna, the nourishment we need each day, to put one foot in front of the other, together.

Portland Friends Meeting is being shaped and reshaped by the Ever-changing and the Eternal.

Quick Summary of Income and Expenses for PFM
Through February 2022
2nd Month = 17%

	Year-to-Date	% of Budget
INCOME		
Donations	\$14,700	23%
Rent		
Endowment	\$3000	17%
Other		
TOTAL	\$17,700	21%
EXPENSES		
Meetinghouse Expenses	\$2,169	7%
Meeting Community	\$5,621	12%
Meeting Monetary Contributions	\$3,250	42%
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$11,040	13%
Balance	\$6,660	

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!

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

Notes from Financial Oversight Committee meeting on 2/10/22

1. Couple of interesting information points:

- In one month (January), the value of the endowment dropped from around \$921,000 to \$886,872 (down 5.76%). This reflected a drop in the market, not any withdrawals.
- An overview of 2021 donations to the meeting showed that fewer than half of members and regular attenders contributed to PFM in 2021 (i.e., 62 of 125). The range of annual donations varied from below \$1000 to over \$6,000. Retirement age donors contributed 70+% of total dollars contributed.

2. Observations and reflections on discernment session:

- Committee members were grateful for the way that the clerks handled the discernment session. Committee members expressed being open to listening and willing to change, as well as their continuing care for protecting the financial sustainability of the meeting.
- Central Qs: What does PFM mean to us as a faith community, a community of F/friends, and to us as individual seekers? What resources are necessary to sustain it? What is our role/responsibility to the world outside our meeting?
- A theme: varying generational perspectives on resources.. The meetinghouse (building and grounds) seemed important to older members, as well as those with children, but didn't seem as important to some younger members whose spiritual ties weren't as connected to a building. One "40-ish" person expressed concern about the ability of folks her age, particularly ones with children, to sustain PFM financially after the current older supporters pass away. Some remembered times when the meeting was financially strapped, and felt it wasn't a bad thing to help the meeting avoid financially anxious times in the future.
- The committee felt a need for the meeting community to explore together what's needed to sustain the meeting, how much is "enough," how to sustain the meeting if endowment \$\$ wouldn't be available to support ongoing expenses.
- There was discussion about the nature of the capitalist system and our meeting's relationship to it. One committee member was hurt by someone referring to the meeting's resources as "stolen" money, when she worked hard for the money she contributed to the meeting. This is an "elephant in the room" issue of potential conflict that could provoke hard feelings but, if addressed lovingly, could open the way to deeper sharing among all of us about our relationship to money and as participants in our broader political, social and economic systems.
- There was discussion on our meeting's role/responsibility to use its resources for social good. Might the meeting agree on a subcommittee to discern where funds might support social justice/community efforts? Some expressed concern about how that might work – how would folks feel about contributions to the meeting supporting things they don't agree on particularly? Could that cause disunity and discontent? Another thought was that the meeting could more deeply support leadings, whether individual ones or those of the meeting community.

3. Next steps: The financial oversight committee brainstormed about ways to support the meeting's next steps for discernment about resources. Expressed again its openness to change and provide transparency and information that could be helpful. Perhaps more useful financial reports? More detailed looks at anticipated expenses, not just ongoing operating expenses, but bigger needs, like new HVAC systems, etc.? There was a small amount of trepidation but a bigger amount of excitement about possibilities for deeper communication and vitality.

Portland Friends Meeting Email Lists

To send a message to "**Life of the Meeting**:" pfm-life-of-the-meeting@googlegroups.com.

To send a message to "**Wider Community**:" pfm-wider-community@googlegroups.com.

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

**Material regarding renewal of Commitment to Nuclear Weapon Elimination
Portland Friends Meeting: September 10, 2000**

"The Meeting approved becoming a signatory of the Abolition 2000 Network (text of the Statement for our archives is attached to these minutes) and instructed the Co-Clerks to inform the Network of our decision." (Minute#4)

Summary of Abolition 2000: "A world free of nuclear weapons is a shared aspiration of humanity. This goal cannot be achieved in a non-proliferation regime that authorizes the possession of nuclear weapons by a small group of states. Our common security requires the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. Our objective is definite and unconditional abolition of nuclear weapons."

Summary of Back from the Brink: "The Call to Prevent Nuclear War is a national grassroots campaign seeking the abolition of nuclear weapons and fundamental change in U.S. nuclear weapons policy. We're calling upon the U.S. to enter into negotiations now with the other nuclear-armed states for a verifiable, enforceable, timebound agreement to eliminate their weapons. We also call on the U.S. to unilaterally adopt several key policies to reduce the danger of nuclear war while these negotiations proceed."

Proposed renewal minute: Portland Friends seeks to renew our commitment to the complete elimination of all nuclear weapons by endorsing the 2022 "Back from the Brink" campaign. We support our full participation in the advocacy work of the Maine chapter of Physicians for Social Responsibility. Further, we request that members be kept apprised through the PFM Newsletter and PFM – Email.

Quakers from Afar

by Linda Seger and Peter Le Var, Colorado

All of us have had our Quaker Community disrupted and changed in the last two years. For some it has been a time of transition and then, a gradual and welcoming coming together again. For some it has been a time of transformation and new directions. For others it has opened unexpected paths.

A year ago we left our Colorado Springs Meeting, due to long-standing internal problems that were not being addressed or resolved. It was a difficult but clear decision. But how does one find Quaker Community when there is no other Meeting nearby? We have both been Quakers for decades. We were married in Santa Monica Meeting 35 years ago. We fairly quickly realized that as long as there were zoom meetings, we could go to Quaker Meetings anyplace in the world – and we did. We went to New Zealand and Ireland and Montana and Minnesota and Virginia and several New England Meetings. There were wonderful surprises along the way. We thought we were going to Providence, Rhode Island Meeting and were gently told by the clerk when we introduced ourselves, that we were actually at Providence, Pennsylvania Meeting. We decided to go to the Portland, Oregon meeting and googled Portland Friends Meeting - and received a lovely welcoming email from Portland, Maine. We took Portland, Maine up on their invitation.

Although we continued to attend some other meetings, we kept being drawn back to Portland, Maine. We began attending the weekday 30 minute silent meeting and, when you changed your time to 10:45 am on Sundays, it became a perfect time for us in Colorado. We began exploring the idea of Quaker Community and how we could be Portland, Maine Quakers from afar. This wasn't a matter of joining a Meeting but of connecting with a community. To further our exploration, we decided to fulfill a long time dream of coming to Maine, which we did last Fall. It was also partly a test: Were we still Quakers and did we still feel connected to other Quakers? We attended Portland Meeting, had several dinners with Portland Friends, and also attended Arcadia and Farmington Meetings. We returned home with clarity - we had the connection we were seeking, knowing it would be from far away. Yes, we were definitely Quakers.

We began to experience Community as being about sharing stories and joys and concerns and sorrows and struggles. We connected with mutual feelings of social justice. And as we saw your faces every morning and on Sundays, and heard the messages, we felt in unity with the ways you expressed Quaker values and attitudes. But we still have one last question in our search for a Quaker Community: is this a community we could turn to if we had the need of a Quaker Clearness Committee? At the request of the Ministry and Counsel Committee, Lyn Ballou brought our request forward, and arranged for us to have a Clearness Committee to explore ways we could interact with your community. And we found our answer: the Portland, Maine Meeting would be there for us if we had some struggle that needed your help.

Instead of being Quakers wandering for many years without a connection, we were surprised how quickly and with such Quaker Clarity, this path unfolded. We have felt a mutual care and commitment, leading us deeper into the reservoirs of our own spiritual life. It has been a tremendously fulfilling surprise. We found the sharing during worship to be insightful and deep and heartfelt. We learned that the little boxes of people on a computer screen cannot keep us from these Quaker connections that continue to form us, compel us forward in our own spiritual lives, and connect us unexpectedly with your beautiful Quaker Community.

Family Promise

I contributed an article about the Greater Portland Family Promise food distribution program to the February issue of the Portland Friends Meeting newsletter. Sue Nelson and Paula Rossvall wrote about their experiences volunteering on food distribution day; it is wonderful to have them as part of the team.

Portland Friends is now supporting a second family, sharing the responsibility for supporting two families with First Lutheran. Wendy and Yvonne from First Lutheran and Paula and I from Portland Friends all agreed that we could support Sofia and her two-year-old daughter as well as Celina and Isiquiel and their three children. Three of us met with Sofia and her caseworker and by the time the meeting was over, Paula had offered to take Sofia grocery shopping, which she did a couple of days later.

Celina and Isiquiel are doing fine, but their children's bedroom is very cold. The gift of a space heater from a Portland Friends family has solved that problem. When Wendy and I delivered the space heater, we discovered that the flap on one of the heating ducts had been painted shut. We went to work with a screwdriver and scissors and finally got it open, but with four large floor to ceiling windows in the bedroom, the space heater is still needed and much appreciated.

Both families live in the same apartment building.

Greater Portland Family Promise, with support from Portland Friends Meeting (e.g. a letter of support signed by our co-clerks) applied for a Special Focus Grant from the Obadiah Brown Benevolent Fund and was awarded \$10,000 for the food distribution program. This will enable GPPF to continue the program for another year and to purchase a freezer for storing cassava leaves, fish, and goat meat.

I am so grateful for the support, both in time and money and in prayers, from Portland Friends for Family Promise.

Right Relationship with Indigenous Peoples

Wayne Cobb, Jennifer Frick, Jessica Eller, Emily Troll, Ann Dodd-Collins

The Right Relationship group has not met, but as individuals we have been busy. Some of us have been attending Wabanaki Alliance meetings, some of us have been attending the public hearings on the various Wabanaki bills before the Judiciary Committee, and all of us have been writing and submitting testimony.

The Judiciary Committee received more than 1600 pieces of written testimony on LD 1626, An Act Implementing the Recommendations of the Task Force on Changes to the Maine Indian Claims Settlement Implementing Act, almost all of them in support. This is the bill that would begin to restore sovereignty to our tribes in Maine and give them access to the 150 federal laws that have been passed since 1980 to benefit federally recognized tribes throughout the US. Twenty-three Portland Friends submitted testimony. In addition, the Meeting approved submitting testimony at our February Meeting for Business, and that was submitted by Wayne Cobb.

Both Wayne and Ann have submitted testimony on other bills on behalf of the Friends Committee on Maine Public Policy. Wayne submitted testimony on LD 1907, An Act To Review State Lands and Waterways That Have Sacred, Traditional or Other Significance to the Wabanaki Tribes. Ann submitted testimony on LD 906, An Act To Provide Passamaquoddy Tribal Members Access to Clean Drinking Water.


The Wabanaki Alliance is planning an in-person lobby day at the State House on Wednesday, March 9. Wayne will be sending out an e-group post on this soon.

My work is loving the world.
Here the sunflowers, there the hummingbird--
Equal seekers of sweetness.
Here the quickening yeast; there the blue plums.
Here the clam deep in the speckled sand.

Are my boots old? Is my coat torn?
Am I no longer young, and still not half-perfect? Let me
keep my mind on what matters,
which is my work,

which is mostly standing still and learning to be
astonished.
The phoebe, the delphinium.
The sheep in the pasture, and the pasture.
Which is mostly rejoicing, since all the ingredients are here,

which is gratitude, to be given a mind and a heart
and these body-clothes,
a mouth with which to give shouts of joy
to the moth and the wren, to the sleepy dug-up clam,
telling them, over and over, how it is
that we live forever.



Meeting Resources
Discernment Sessions:
1pm on March 27,
April 24, May 22

Report from the Steering Committee on Discerning the Right Use of Meeting Resources Presented to Meeting for Business – March 6, 2022

After the January 23 threshing session on meeting resources, the Steering Committee met to season what we'd heard, and to consider next steps. We also found helpful a report from the Financial Oversight Committee (attached). Some themes that arose:

- This is fundamentally a spiritual question about the right use of our Meeting's resources.
- We recognize that our Meeting's resources include not just money, but also spiritual gifts, fellowship and hard work. We've heard a desire that this threshing process should focus on the right use of our Meeting's property and financial resources.
- Some root questions are emerging for us to explore together as a Meeting: What's important about our Meeting? What does our Meeting community mean to us, and what do we mean to it? What's our responsibility to the wider world outside our Meeting community?
- We heard strongly how our Meeting matters tremendously to us, both as a way (either a physical place or a virtual one) to worship together and as a community supporting our individual spiritual journeys.
- Shining through the threshing session was our respect and love for each other. We heard a need for (and welcome) the opening it brings to get to know each other better.
- Linked to this love for our community: Fear that opening up these questions will divide us. We hope to learn how to talk openly and with tenderness to each other about tough subjects like resources/money and our feelings about them. We aspire to talk about possible differences in how we feel called to use PFM's resources.
- Those differences might include fundamental things like: Should we have any endowment at all? How important is maintaining our building and cemetery? How much is "enough?"

Future: We are excited to keep going. We are planning another discernment session at 1:00p.m. on Sunday, March 27. And we are planning additional sessions on April 24 and May 22. Stay tuned for more details as we get closer to those dates.

Steering Committee members: Lyn Ballou, Heather Denkmire, Dorothy Grannell, Rob Levin, Becky Steele, Emily Troll, Peter Woodrow

PROBLEM SOLVING IN A DIVIDED AMERICA

What Can We Learn From Frances Perkins' Era? What Can We Do Now?

Sunday, April 3, 2022 • 5:00 PM (EDT)
Virtual Forum • Free Event
Sign up at www.francesperkinscenter.org




Maya Rockey Moore Cummings


Robert Putnam


Shaylyn Romney Garrett


Janet Dewart Bell

Featuring: **Robert Putnam**, author of *Bowling Alone*, & **Shaylyn Romney Garrett**, Co-authors, *The Upswing—How We Came Together a Century Ago and How WE Can Do It Again*; **Janet Dewart Bell**, Founder, LEAD Intergenerational Solutions. Author, *Lighting the Fires of Freedom—African American Women in the Civil Rights Movement*; Moderator: **Dr. Maya Rockey Moore Cummings**, President, Global Policy Solutions

Memorial Minute

Arthur Jablow Fink, 74, Peaks Island, Maine, passed on April 21, 2021.

With his beloved family by his side, he bid farewell in his island home with a fire in the fireplace and candles lit. The family's dear friend and Chaplain, Jean Berman, led a simple, collaborative experience honoring Arthur in the sacred time of his spirit crossing over.

Arthur was born and grew up in Manhattan. He attended the Friends Seminary high school. While a student there he volunteered to work on the campus of Friends World College on Long Island as it prepared to open. There he met a group of remarkable and wise Friends who were creating this college. These experiences inspired him to attend Swarthmore College, where he studied physics. He received a master's degree in computer science from Harvard and was a doctoral candidate in artificial intelligence.

When Arthur realized that his doctoral work at Harvard was largely going to serve the military he left Harvard and went to work at AFSC in Boston. At AFSC Arthur worked in Public Relations, hosting his own radio broadcast and discovering a passion for broadcasting journalism. Along with a small group of Friends, he researched and published reports documenting the military industrial involvement in education, particularly at Harvard. Arthur's academic and press credentials allowed him to attend conferences on weapon development where he challenged those developing and funding weapons. He was arrested and jailed several times for his anti-war work. One Friend's inspiration to attend Law School was his conviction that Arthur and another Friend, Sukie Rice, would continue to need representation in court.

He had a long career as an international expert in software development and usability. His work was groundbreaking and durable, particularly for the attention to how the user would engage with the software. Arthur was one of the pioneers in 'user friendly' programming. He presented widely around the world.

He traveled extensively for work and had a special place in his heart for his cherished Amsterdam and the Netherlands.

Arthur was both a scientist and an artist. He had a passion and a gift for dance photography that took him throughout New England into New York. He was the resident dance photographer at the Bates Dance Festival for over 12 years. Arthur described dance as his "spiritual gift" which taught him "at a very deep soul level." His portfolio of photographs of dancers captured the dancers' experience as they created their performances. A posthumous show, "Dancing in the Light" at the Spiegel Gallery at Maine Jewish Museum displayed some of these remarkable images.

In 2013, Arthur was invited to join a group traveling to Auschwitz as the photographer. The group created a visual, musical and dramatic performance from the journals of Etty Hillelsum, who had been interned in the camps as a young woman. His colleagues ultimately performed at the Etty Hillelsum Congress in Belgium. An exhibit at the Maine Jewish Museum and at Portland Friends Meetinghouse showed some of Arthur's photographs from that trip, capturing the sense that the trees were still impacted by the pain and the cruelty that had happened at the camp. Arthur planned other presentations of the work with a focus on bringing hope and light as we consider dark historical events.

Arthur's first child, Sarah, died as an infant. He carried the grief of this death for the rest of his life and he shared the understanding he gained that each life, no matter how long or short, was whole and was a gift. He brought this experience and wisdom to volunteer for years photographing babies and supporting families whose children had very short lives, died at birth or were stillborn. Arthur was instrumental in supporting Friends who had a short lived son to hold a memorial meeting at Portland Friends Meeting. This inspired other older Friends to also honor their own short lived child.

He celebrated the community of Peaks Island, and often served as the unofficial island photographer, photographing the parades and events for the community to enjoy. Teaching photography courses was a treasured part of his photographic career.

(Memorial Minute, Arthur Fink, continued from p.10)

Arthur served on the board of Creative Portland, the Historic Preservation Commission of Portland, and as president of the board of the Merriconeag Waldorf School in Freeport, during which he oversaw the first Capital Campaign to design and build what is now the Maine Coast Waldorf School in Freeport. Before moving to Portland, Arthur served on the board of Pine Hill, the Waldorf School in Wilton, N.H. Arthur also served on the board of Abbey of Hope, a group fostering interfaith dialogue, and was an engaged participant in the Northfield Conference - a multi-age, multi-faith, multi-gender Spiritual Conference held every summer at Northfield-Mt. Herman School in Mass.

For 20 years, Arthur was involved with PechaKucha Portland, a branch of an international story-telling forum begun in Tokyo, which offers opportunities for people to share their passion about ideas and experiences. He served on its board of directors and frequently spoke and mentored other presenters, sharing his expertise in consulting and coaching.

He had over fifty years of cherished involvement with the Quaker community in New England, serving as the recording clerk for the yearly meeting and on several Yearly Meeting committees, including the current committee for revision of Faith & Practice. Arthur first joined Friends at Fifteenth Street Meeting in high school, and later was a member of Friends Meeting in Cambridge, Monadnock Meeting and Portland Friends Meeting. At Portland, Arthur facilitated a two year long process which led Portland to approve same gender marriages. Portland Friends knew Arthur as a gifted recording clerk, able to capture the deep sense of a meeting. Arthur was admired for his ability to write using precise and eloquent language. This gift started early as a game he and his mother (an editor herself) would play together. With *The Elements of Style* by Strunk and White at hand, they would practice boiling down texts by removing words unnecessary to communicate intent, an art he cultivated life long.

During the pandemic years, Arthur treasured attending Meeting for Worship on Zoom at Pendle Hill, London and Amsterdam Friends Meetings. During this time Arthur hosted a "query group" where he would bring a query exploring the intersection of creativity and faithfulness to a group followed by a period of worship sharing.

Always the thought-provoking questioner in any meeting or conference, he encouraged compassion, exploration and soulful artistic expression in discernment. At his memorial service a person shared their conviction that Arthur's super power was asking questions that focused attention in unexpected ways and at times changed peoples' lives.

Arthur liked to tell stories and excelled at it. He often began with personal memories and experiences then gracefully transitioned to universal truths. Through combining personal and universal, his stories touched others' hearts and minds deeply.

Arthur was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer on his seventy-fourth birthday and died seven and a half weeks later. He was remarkably centered, generous and at peace during this period. He died confident that death was not an end, but a transition.

An outside Memorial Meeting was held on Saturday, October 9, 2021, at the Lions Club on Peaks Island, honoring Arthur's life and legacy, and the pure joy he shared so freely.

Arthur was predeceased by his mother, Selma Jablow Fink, his second mother, Sona Holman Fink, his father, Karl Fink, his infant daughter Sarah.

Arthur is survived by his beloved wife Aaiyn Foster, his second daughter, Alyssa Foster Tabbutt, his son-in-law Kenneth Curry, his grandchildren, Jackson George, Lola Rose, Homer James, and Ophelia Grace of South Lake Tahoe, California, his stepsons Austin, and Jonathan Chick and their families and by his much loved sister, Janet Rose Fink.

Arthur had a private Green Burial at Portland Friends Meeting Cemetery on April 24, 2021.

2021 Portland Friends Meeting Donation Overview

- 50% of potential donors contributed to PFM in 2021⁽¹⁾ (i.e. 62 of 125)
- Many members did not provide financial support to the meeting in 2021
- The range of annual donations per donor to PFM was great, from below \$100 to over \$6,000
- The most common 2021 donation level was between \$251-\$500
- 16 of our 66 2021 donors each gave over \$1,000
- The top 2 donors accounted for 22% of the year's total donations
- Retirement age donors contributed 70+% of total dollars contributed⁽²⁾
- The average annual contribution of a retirement age donor was 43% greater than that of a working age donor^(2,3,5)

Background

Number of Donors v. Potential Donors

Potential # of PFM 2021 donors:

- = Approximately the # of active PFM participants in 2021⁽¹⁾
- = 125

Actual # of PFM 2021 donors:

= 66

Active 2021 Donors (i.e. have been involved w. PFM in recent years):

- = 62
- = 50% of active participants in the meeting
- = Approx. 50% of potential donors

Donation by \$ Range

Annual Donation Range	# of Donors	Total Donations	% of Total Donations	Cumulative Donations	Cumulative % of Total Donations
\$ 1 - \$ 250	17	\$ 2,510	4 %	\$ 2,510	4 %
\$ 251 - \$500	18	\$ 7,290	13 %	\$ 9,800	17 %
\$ 501 - \$ 1,000	15	\$ 10,685	19 %	\$ 20,485	36 %
\$ 1,001 - \$2,000	10	\$ 13,411	24 %	\$ 33,896	60 %
\$ 2,001 - \$3,000	4	\$ 10,225	18 %	\$ 44,121	78 %
\$ 3,001 - \$ 4,000	0	0	0	\$ 44,121	78 %
\$ 4,001 - \$ 5,000	0	0	0	\$ 44,121	78 %
\$ 5,001 - \$ 6,000	0	0	0	\$ 44,121	78 %
\$ 6,001 +	2	\$ 12,300	22 %	\$ 56,421	100 %
	66	\$ 56,421	100 %		

Donation by Age Group

Donor Type	# Of This Type	% of Total Donors	Total Donation	% of Total Donations	Avg. Donation (5)
Retirement Age (2)	45	68 %	\$ 39,830	71 %	\$ 769
Working Age (3)	17	26 %	\$ 14,905	26 %	\$ 537
Other (4)	4	6 %	\$ 1,686	3 %	\$ 421
TOTAL	66	100 %	\$ 56,421	100 %	

(1) In this context a potential donor is an adult of any age who is, or has been in recent years, involved with PFM in some way. This is based on the PFM 4/21 mailing list, edited as needed. It does not include those who have moved away, not attended in years, adult children (of active participants) who make their adult lives elsewhere, those who belong to other meetings, etc.

(2) Donors of retirement age who are, or have in recent years, been involved with PFM in some way

(3) Donors of working age who are, or have in recent years, been involved with PFM in some way

(4) Memorial and visitor donors; not otherwise involved in PFM; not considered potential sources of future support

(5) Excludes 2 "outlier" donors, one of retirement age and one of working age, with roughly equal donation amounts, each of which are far above all other 2021 donation amounts. Including their donations in the averages would skew the figures average significantly, undermining their usefulness.

Welcoming Families Back to the Meeting House

Presented by Lyn, crafted by Emily, YREC and many others -
March 6, 2022

At Portland Friends Meeting, we have missed families and kids so very much during the pandemic. Starting next Sunday, March 13th, we are excited to welcome families back to the Meetinghouse every single Sunday, for worship and child-care for kids at least 2 years old.

(Children under 2 cannot yet be vaccinated or rapid tested or be expected to wear masks, so we are holding off on this age group for at least a little while longer.) We request that unvaccinated children take a rapid test at home right before coming to the Meetinghouse, and we will provide tests for free or reimburse anyone for out-of-pocket expenses. Children in the Meetinghouse will be expected to remain masked, at least for the time being. In the meantime, feel free to reach out to Emily if you need help procuring or paying for a test.

You can also reach out to Emily if you are interested in helping out with child-care, joining the YREC committee, or programming in any capacity - we will need many hands to make the transition to First Day School, and we are hoping to get started as soon as we can.

As is our practice, the whole family is invited for the first 15 minutes of worship. But unlike in the past, children will now have the option to sit with their parents, cozy up in a kids corner, or take supplies from that corner to wherever their parent(s) may be. After 15 minutes, a song or a quiet signal from Susan Grannell will welcome kids downstairs for a project and play choices. (Of course, children who want to stay in Meeting for Worship are always welcome to do so.)

We will have several additional childcare providers available and, as we understand our numbers over the coming weeks, we will adjust.

This is just one phase in our ongoing experiment about how to live spiritually as a whole community. Thank you for embracing the delight of gathering together again in worship as a family. And we hold with sadness that we are not all together yet, including those families with kids under 2, as well as immunocompromised Friends and others who cannot yet join us.

As we prepare for next Sunday, please give some thought to these queries from Maggie Fiori which we hope to discuss more together soon:

- What can we do to explicitly tell youth, families, and the Meeting as a whole that kids of all ages are always welcome in worship? Think about before, during, and after worship times.
- What messages and invitations can we give to help Friends of all ages know what to do in worship? What can we learn from programmed intergenerational worship about how to care for this unprogrammed worship?
- How can we lovingly nudge ourselves as a meeting towards a relationship with worship that is about communion with Spirit, and not about the outward trappings of worship that kids tend to challenge (like perfect silence and stillness)?



Portland Friends Meeting Bread Day 3/5/22

*Rob Levin and Luke Hankins getting ready to bake
challah loaves*

Photographer: Chris Fitze

Portland Friends Meeting
1837 Forest Ave
Portland, ME 04103

Address Service Requested

Next newsletter deadline:
Tuesday, April 5, 11:59pm

submissions: pfmnewsletter@grantwinners.net

