Portland Friends Meeting Newsletter
Fourth Month 2022
Meeting for Worship: 10:45a Sundays

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“Examine your leadings through a process of discernment to determine whether or not they are grounded in the Spirit. Test your discernment with your faith community. Do you recognize divinely inspired insight? Can you distinguish between divine leadings and your own needs or desires?”

—NEYM Faith and Practice

Calendar
April 24 1-3p Discernment session on Stewardship of PFM resources. Meeting on zoom, preparation materials to follow.

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, btczyz@gmail.com, 207 899 5937

*contact Clerks for online Meeting for Worship links

Bread Day, 2022
On March 5th, Quakers gathered at Friends Meeting House to find Spirit through the baking of bread.

It was a joyful day, sometimes quiet and sometimes cacophonous. We ate together, talked together, sang together, prayed together, and made a whole lot of bread.

It was a working day. There was scrubbing, chopping, organizing, leading, following, kneading, and baking. People showed up early and stayed late. Some folks even helped deliver bread to various community members when the event was over.

It was a connecting day. People who hadn’t seen each other in a long time talked and talked. Older folks tended to the younger folks, starting conversations and drawing them into the activities. Younger folks brought curiosity and enthusiasm, as well as expertise in having fun.

And yes, it was a spirit day. We witnessed the extraordinary power of yeast. It’s small and mighty, and transforms the other ingredients into the magic of bread. Together, we can be like yeast - rising to change what’s around us into something more delicious.

I hope you’ll join us next year. And I hope you’ll accept invitation to look for Spirit in any of your everyday experiences, whether it’s bread or something else completely.
We began in silent worship at 9:00 a.m. on April 3rd, gathered in person and remotely, and connected via Zoom. There were 53 members and attenders present for this meeting. Holding the meeting in the Light were Ann Dodd-Collins on Zoom, Chris Beach in meetinghouse.

Our presiding Co-clerk, Rob Levin, read the advice and query, “Examine your leadings through a process of discernment to determine whether or not they are grounded in the Spirit. Test your discernment with your faith community. Do you recognize divinely inspired insight? Can you distinguish between divine leadings and your own needs or desires?” (NEYM Faith and Practice)

1. Clerk’s Comments – The Co-clerk gave thanks for the loving support of Friends around his mother’s illness and passing.

Hybrid Meeting for Business Overview – The Co-clerk explained the holy experiment the meeting was attempting to connect Friends both in the meetinghouse and on Zoom. He introduced all attenders both in person and on Zoom and asked that Friends please reach out to the Co-clerks at coclerks@portlandfriendsmeeting.org with feedback on their experience. The decision will be made shortly as to whether the May Meeting for Business will be on Zoom only.

2. Minutes of March 6, 2022 - The minutes from our March Meeting for Business were accepted as printed in the newsletter.

3. Update from Covid Health Advisory Group on In-Person Worship and Covid Meetinghouse Use Guidelines – Lyn Ballou

The Meeting House Use Guidelines have been updated as of March 31, 2022. Three changes were made:

1. In regard to masking, people should wear a mask indoors, but may lower the mask during Meeting for Worship in order to deliver a message.
2. Masks and social distancing are not required out of doors.
3. As our families and children return to the Meetinghouse, parents and our Family Coordinator, teachers and other caregivers will be conferring about preferences around whether to have snack indoors in the basement, or only outdoors.

These changes are taking place amid continuing uncertainty about where COVID will be taking us this Spring. The committee reviewing questions around health and safety will be monitoring developments and may find it necessary to return to stricter guidelines.

4. Leadings Committee Report – Kathy Beach

Kathy Beach read the Report for Business Meeting about The Leadings Committee provided in advance of Meeting for Business which laid out the history of the creation of the Leadings Committee, an explanation as to what is a leading, a history of the grants given thus far and the application process. (The next deadline for applications to the Leadings Committee is April 30th.)

Friends attending the meeting who had previously received grants generously shared their leadings and their experiences with the grant process. The Friends who spoke were:

- Kathy Beach – a year of art projects for the Meeting culminating in a display of the art created
- Genna Ulrich – workshops to share how to make low-cost bike bags (panniers) to assist with supporting alternatives to transportation using fossil fuels
- Wayne Cobb – research on the history of Quakers in Greater Portland culminating in a book
- Stephanie Fairchild – walked the Camino de Santiago, an ancient pilgrimage route and gave a presentation to meeting on the contemplative walk
- Mary Tracy – provided supplies for refugees being supported by Catholic Charities

The book, “Nudged by the Spirit” by Charlotte Lyman Fardelmann was suggested as a resource for Friends.

She also shared with the meeting a series of queries to consider going forward:

- After 10 years of awarding Leadings grants, are we fulfilling the vision that came out of the 2011 threshing session process?
- Should we consider making changes to the Leadings grants program?
- How can we better share the Spirit-led work that infuses and comes out of Leadings grant projects?
- How does the Leadings grant program, in its current format or with possible changes, fit with our more general discernment process around stewardship of resources that we are undertaking this year?

5. Ministry and Counsel

- Ministry and Counsel Structural Overview – Beth Bussiere-Nichols

Ministry and Counsel Committee’s focus is the meeting community’s spiritual health and well-being. Beth provided a diagram in advance of meeting which shows the groups and concerns that make up Ministry and Counsel’s efforts.

They include nourishing the meeting’s working groups which are:

- Family Promise Working Group
- Faithfulness Working Groups
- Right Relationship with Indigenous Peoples Working Group
- Clearness Working Group (membership, marriage, transfer, etc.)
- Nurturing Ministry Working Group
- And other concerns such as:
  - Memorial Minutes and life records
  - Co-clerk support
  - Co-clerk support
  - Co-clerk support
  - Co-clerk support

- Nurturing Ministries Working Group – Fritz Weiss

Fritz provided in advance the Nurturing Ministry Working Group Report to Meeting for Business, April 2022 which gives an overview of the meaning of ministry, the working group’s process and resources for grounding our understanding of nurturing ministry. He described to the meeting the difference between ministry and ministers and that ministry is a call given to serve creation, the Divine, in a way that this hard to deny or cannot be denied. Calls to ministry can engender confusion, resistance and that a minister is a role and we are all ministers as Friends enter into worship and relationship with the divine.

There are currently 7 Friends under the care of the Nurturing Ministry Working Group.

In response to a question, the Co-clerk shared that members of Ministry and Counsel are chosen by Nominating Committee.

6. Rising Concerns – Friends raised the question and their concerns that with only 9 people on the enough to handle all this?

Currently, there are no Co-clerks for M&C. The Co-clerk asked if anyone has additional concerns that they haven’t shared to please reach out to the Co-clerks by email or phone.

7. Closing worship – Our meeting closed in silent worship at 10:38 am, purposing to meet again, at 9:00 a.m. on Sunday, May 1, 2022.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Pyle, Recording Clerk

Advance Materials sent with agenda:

- March Minutes for Meeting for Business
- Updates to Meetinghouse Use Guidelines
- Leadings Committee Report
- Ministry & Counsel Structural Diagram
- Nurturing Ministries Working Group Report
Meetinghouse Use Guidelines Update, as of March 31, 2022, additional note: It is also our hope to adapt to changing circumstances in ways that bring our community back together more often. In that connection we will be putting out a poll in early April seeking people’s preferences around where and how to worship and to provide other community events in the coming weeks and months.

Report for Business Meeting about The Leadings Committee
April 3, 2022
Presented by Kathy Beach

How did the Leadings Committee get started?
Mary Hillas and Barbie Potter were long-time members of PFM. They were role models for many of us. They led silent retreats at their home in Buxton where many of us remember walking the labyrinth that they had made in the field next to their house. Mary and Barbie moved to Falmouth in their later years, and they continued to open their home to many of us for retreats, dinners, and times to talk about what was in our hearts. Mary was diagnosed with aphasia in her 70s and made the decision to stop eating and drinking because she did not want to live with the rapidly progressing loss of language. She died with dignity at home, with Barbie by her side. Quite a few years later, Barbie suffered a massive stroke, and she was clear before that event happened that she also wanted to die at home, surrounded by loving Friends, which she did. Both women were very generous to the PFM community during their lifetimes and now after their passing we still connect with them in many ways. Many of us, when in a tough place, will ask ourselves, “What would Barbie do?”

In her will, Barbie made it clear that she wanted to leave substantial amounts of money to Friends School of Portland and to PFM. She made a bequest of $600,000 to FSP and $300,000 to PFM. Upon receipt of this generous gift, the PFM community held several threshing sessions to determine how best to use Barbie’s gift. Out of those threshing sessions, the Leadings Committee was formed in 2011, with the purpose of financially helping Friends with leadings that are Spirit-led. Money for the Leadings projects comes from income from invested funds that are held in our Friends Fiduciary Corporation account.

What is a Spiritual Leading?
A wonderful book by a Maine Quaker, Charlotte Fardelmann, Nudged by the Spirit, states that a Leading does not go away just because you are unable to attend to it immediately. It will resurface periodically until the time is right for you to pursue it. Because it comes from the Spirit, it will have some benefit to others, often in the wider world. Leadings come in many shapes and sizes. Today we’ll hear about a few Leadings Grants from Friends who have received grants in the past, including Mary Tracy, Wayne Cobb, Stefanie Fairchild and Genna Ulrich.

How Leadings Grants Are Awarded
Grants are generally limited to one-time applications for each project. Grant size is modest, with $1,500 being the average grant awarded. Looking back over the history of projects to date, the smallest grant was $350 and the largest was $4,350. The Leadings Committee has awarded a total of $54,000 in grants since it formed in 2012. There have been times in the last ten years when a cycle would go by with no submissions of Leadings grant applications. There is potential here that has not been utilized to date.

Applicants are encouraged to find matching funds elsewhere and other collaborative funding strategies for more ambitious leadings ideas. Several projects have started through a Leadings grant from Portland Friends Meeting and have expanded with the help of the Obadiah Brown Benevolent Fund and/or the Lyman Fund.

There are several good resources in the PFM library, including Nudged by the Spirit. In addition to books, the members of the Leadings Committee welcome questions from Friends about an idea that is percolating or that requires some guidance.

Examples of Leadings Grants
❖ Shirley Hager received a grant to help her continue her work with Wabanaki friends. She and Mawopiyane have recently published a book entitled The Gatherings: Reimagining Indigenous-settler Relations
❖ Wayne Cobb used his grant to continue his research about early Quakers in the Falmouth/Portland area. He has recently published a book entitled Quakers in Early Falmouth and Portland, Maine: 1740-1850
Mary Tracy worked with Catholic Charities and reorganized their storeroom so that donated goods could be found easily. Mary used grant money to purchase basic household supplies needed by all new Mainers as they settled in.

Kathy Beach bought art supplies and facilitated monthly art sessions for a year in the Portland Friends Meetinghouse so that Friends could enjoy each other’s company while creating beautiful pieces of art.

Queries to Consider Going Forward:
- After 10 years of awarding Leadings grants, are we fulfilling the vision that came out of the 2011 threshing session process?
- Should we consider making changes to the Leadings grants program?
- How can we better share the Spirit-led work that infuses and comes out of Leadings grant projects?
- How does the Leadings grant program, in its current format or with possible changes, fit with our more general discernment process around stewardship of resources that we are undertaking this year?

**LEADINGS APPLICATION:**
Application should be made as a written request of approximately two pages plus a budget outline. Your application should include the following:

1) A brief description of your project/activity, and your motivation for undertaking this leading. Be as specific as possible about the expected results and how it might benefit Portland Friends Meeting or the wider community.

2) Information about yourself, and a sense that the time is right to fully commit to the leading and give it your best effort.

3) Budget for the project/activity, including expenses and income from other sources. Please tell the committee of any independent corroboration or benefit you have received in regard to the project.

4) Two reports on your project should be sent to Kathy Beach via email at katherinegbeach@gmail.com, one at the beginning of your project and again at the end of the project. Kathy will share your reports with the Leadings Committee members and a copy of the reports will be placed in the Leadings folder in the PFM library.

5) **Grant Application Deadlines:** April 30 and October 31 each year.

**CURRENT COMMITTEE:**
Kathy Beach, Wayne Cobb, Stefanie Fairchild, Sandi Jensen, Mary Tracy

There are several good resources in the PFM library, listed below.

* Nudged by the Spirit by Charlotte Lyman Fardelmann


* Spiritual Discernment: The Context and Goal of Clearness Committees, by Patricia Loring, Pendle Hill Pamphlet 305, 1992

If you desire a clearness committee regarding your leading, please contact Ministry and Counsel for help with setting this up. Some applicants have formed a support group to help with on-going issues during their project.

Applicants must be available to meet with the Leadings Committee to discuss their application if requested. Applications may be sent via email or US Postal Service. Requests for 2022 are to be submitted to:

Kathy Beach at
Either: katherinegbeach@gmail.com
Or: 14 Drew Rd.
     South Portland, ME 04106
Nurturing Ministry Working Group — Report to Meeting for Business, April 2022

A working group of Ministry and Counsel has been formed to nurture ministry in the PFM community.

Beth Bussiere-Nichols, Tracy Booth and Fritz Weiss serve on this working group.

Our working understanding of ministry is “the active response to God’s call.”* It is something Spirit does in us, through us and that we do in and through Spirit. “It is service to God’s creation.”*

Westport Meeting defined ministry this way: “Friends have gifts that support our ongoing spiritual work and community, both within and beyond the meeting proper. However, ministry involves three additional qualities: the gifts are public, the gifts are life-changing in the sense that the life is molded to give fullest expression to the gift, and ministry involves constant praying into the gift to give it its fullest expression.”

We understand the process of recognizing a ministry to begin with a call. A Friend may feel called or the Meeting may discern that we see a Friend being called. Calls may be a gradual dawning of God’s purpose, or a gnawing feeling that we should do something. Sometimes a call is a sudden awareness of what Spirit asks of us. Calls may be emphatic and unmistakable or obscure and subtle. The Meeting will name a clearness committee to test the call. If there is clarity that a Friend is called, this ministry becomes a ministry of the Meeting community.

The working group will then form a Ministry Care Committee – this committee supports the ministry of the friend logistically, emotionally, and spiritually, holds a responsibility to report to the Meeting (through M&C) as necessary and holds the Friends accountable to the call – both to continue when discouraged and to lay down the ministry when the service no longer has life.

At this time the following Friends have Ministry Care Committees:

- Maggie Fiori
- Ann Dodd-Collins
- Elizabeth Szatkowski
- Emily Troll
- Jay O’Hara
- Theresa Oleksiw
- Diana White

A valuable resource for grounding our understanding of nurturing ministry is the book Listening Hearts, Discerning Call in Community. In February, Tom Antonik and Fritz Weiss facilitated a book group with a number of Friends from PFM reading this book.

* Quotes from Listening Hearts…

Learn more about our joyful learning community.

Schedule a Friday morning visit to Friends School of Portland in April.

We are still accepting student applications on a space-available basis for grades 2, 4, and 6.

We continue to have financial aid available as well for these spaces.

Pre-registration for Friday morning visits is required with link here:
https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0D49AEA62EABF4C61-fridays
Notes from PFM Threshing Session March 27, 2022

1. Convenors/facilitators Peter Woodrow and Emily Troll were joined by around 35 Friends in opening worship. The facilitators expressed hopes and intentions that Friends would engage in “heart and soul work” as we moved from sharing our personal/family experiences, feelings and values about money into a sharing about our experiences, hopes and concerns about money more organizationally. The facilitators also reviewed shared intentions about listening and talking to each other with respect, and noted that designated listeners were available if Friends felt a need to talk about anything arising during the discernment process.

2. Friends were (randomly) sorted into 2-person small groups to discuss these queries:
   - Sharing in Pairs 1: What do you like to do to acknowledge the arrival of spring?
   - Sharing in Pairs 2: How our family history shapes our views of money and resources:
     - What messages did you receive in your upbringing about money that shape your values now?
     - Do you remember experiences of scarcity? Of the feeling of having enough, of being secure? Of real privilege compared to others?

3. Re-convening, Friends shared insights from their small-group discussions. Some themes:
   - The Great Depression’s shadow of scarcity and pain continues to be felt through multiple generations of Friends.
   - These questions about money are complex and interweave many strong feelings and values about self-worth, individual responsibility and community, society's structures of class, and shame (both the shame of being poor and the shame that the money one has is unfairly allocated). “Entire books could be written on this question alone.”
   - “Abundance” and “scarcity” mean different things to different folks. Some people who grew up in poverty or relatively impecunious families didn’t feel “scarcity” even through money was short; others were always conscious of not having the “abundance” they saw in other families. Some saw their families affected by parents’ aspirations about money and class. Family experiences with money could also be tied with feelings of being loved and supported (or not).
   - Families’ messages about money were often interlinked with messages about the importance of work, doing one’s “fair share,” and “leaving the world a little better than before you were born.” Other values connected to money included the importance of planning for expenses, living life within one’s means, etc. So, feelings about money could be linked to feelings of self-worth, even if that connection was an illusion.
   - Other family messages connected to money: the importance of giving to others, of belonging to, and contributing to, community with others.

4. For the next breakout session, Friends gathered into (different) small groups of 3 people to explore “Why is it so difficult to talk about money? What can we do about it?”
   - The first question was not universal for all Friends; in their families they talked about money “all the time” (often in the context of what could be afforded (or not)).
   - Some reasons why talking about money can be difficult or “not done”:
     - tied to feelings of shame and discomfort
     - feeling exposed and unsafely vulnerable if others know information about one's financial condition
     - it’s a “high-stakes” thing to discuss – differences might be revealed that could be divisive
     - fear of hurting somebody (or being hurt)
   - As a cultural norm, the message that “we don’t talk about money” can buttress oppression. It can keep people from realizing their oppression fully, by making them reluctant to share information about it with others. Also, silence can allow lies (either explicit or implicit) about money, which can keep oppressive means of earning, building, or keeping money out of the light of scrutiny. (“Empire doesn’t want us to talk about it”)
   - Some thoughts about “what can we do about the reluctance to talk about money?“:
     - Provide a structure for talking about money, something like: We need to talk about money so we can “meet our needs, give some away, and keep some.”
     - De-link money from feelings of shame.
• De-link money from values. Focus on values like truth, love, simplicity. Those are primary. Money is tertiary at best.
• Quaker education (for example, about testimonies of simplicity and equality) can transform feelings/thoughts/cultural expectations about money.
  “Just start talking about it.”

5. After a break, Friends broke into new small groups of 3 to discuss “what are your experiences, good or bad or anything else, with shared assets – in a business, school, a board, family inheritance? Do you view that experience differently than handling your own assets?” Upon reconvening as a large group, Friends shared insights via Zoom chat (captured below):

• Wide variety of life experiences and values re money
• Easier to think about, or talk about, money for organizations than individually.
• More conservative with my personal finances than group ones!
• People get really upset when budgets need to be cut—it’s unfair, lacking good information, no good criteria for cuts….on and on. Leaves a lingering bad feeling for years.
• We agreed that our emphasis as PFM in this work should be: what are our values right now? The meeting has morphed over the decades and those values may have changed. But what are they now?
• What is the purpose of the money for a group? What’s the goal?
• Finances and distribution of wealth in families is harder and more emotional than finances and distribution of wealth in non-profits.
• Serving on finance committees is great way to learn how “rubber meets the road,” how organization commits resources, how it “walks the walk”
• Real grief in organizational budget cutting...loss of colleagues and programs.
• Often easier for a group to give away money than to give away your own money.
• Much consideration for gifts that have been given to a group especially if you knew the givers personally
• Need for transparency relating to how we get and use money. Sense of responsibility for the risks we take with our corporate money. Are we doing what we say we would do. How much risk can we take. What part does fear play?
• Disagreements and deeply personal feelings tied to money are inevitable.
• Easier to give money away than to ask for it, even for worthy Quaker organizations.
• Friends meeting battle over “feathering our own nest (building)” vs. doing good in the world.
• Good experience in another Meeting facing these same issues... which resulted in a big shift in how and where resources were shared.
• In thinking about the tripod mentioned: meet needs, give some away, keep some- natural tension in what percentage to give away vs. anticipating needs that the Meeting might have
• Helps to get in “the weeds” with money when there’s a sense of being good stewards, serving donors’ support of the mission well.
• More feels possible with the pooling of resources, and therefore we’re able to operate with more abundance, in line with our values
• It’s not us against them. It’s how can Quakers make a positive impact on the world.
• Disparate impact of funds - an amount that is fairly inconsequential to one group can make an enormous difference to another
• We talked of Meetings where money decisions were made which had consequences of people never going to business meeting again or leaving meeting altogether. What happened with the person in our meeting who was upset and left her post as recording clerk?
• It is easier to raise money for populations that are not poor. Private schools have and are given wealth much more than organizations that serve poor people or people of color.

6. A period of worship sharing followed. The facilitators wrapped up the session sharing their sense that Friends will continue this discernment in community. The next threshing session is set for 1:00 pm, Sunday, April 24.
An update about COVID-19
by Sharon McDonnell

With the decline in the numbers of infections in Maine people are asking about how to “live with” COVID-19 at this point in time. This is wonderful news and we are back to levels of COVID-19 in Maine that are like the end of last summer or early fall.

We hope that the expanded projects for wastewater testing and continued available testing will help us track where we all are as a community and state to make behavioral adjustments as needed. Use COVID-19 antigen testing as a guide too. These tests are increasingly available via home kits that can be mailed to you, purchased at pharmacies, they will come out from that State of Maine to schools, Pre-K, and via agencies that work with folks that have symptoms or have been exposed. You can order them online via Federal government (https://www.covidtests.gov/) which come via the postal service. In Maine you can also order free ones from the state of Maine. Here is a nice overview of testing and how to get them. https://www.maine.gov/covid19/testing

Scenario- Many experts recommend lots of testing as you move about your world. They would have people testing daily or nearly daily and while the numbers of tests were not available to get anywhere near that, it may be more possible in time. Another approach is this:

- have test kits at home. This way if you need them they are right there and easy to grab. When might you need them?

- you have a sniffle or feel congested and want to be sure. You might test at the onset of symptoms but need to test again after 2-3 days. The test is a very good (although not perfect) of your ability to transmit the virus.

- You were exposed to someone that is COVID positive. Test 2-3 days after exposure. The exact repeat testing series is under review but more is better.

--you are going to visit someone that has an immune compromising condition or is on immune suppressing medication. Perhaps an older family member or a nursing home or hospital. Know before you go.

It is so great if we can normalize these tests so that they are right on hand and can answer the questions you might have at that moment and you don’t have to then go figure out “what do I do?”

Falmouth Quarter is hosting two events this spring:

April 16th - The regular quarterly meeting. In the spring we hear from those in the quarter with recognized ministries, we hear and forward state of society reports, and we hear and forward memorial minutes. I hope that meetings can reach out to those with ministries and consider how they would like to report; we will be on zoom, so there are opportunities for creative sharing. - the plan is to meet from 9 - noon.

May 7th – An “Emerging from Hibernation” whole community celebration in-person at the Durham Meeting house. Plans are underway for a sharing from a book on being a water protector, creating “pollinator balls” with seeds of native Maine pollinators (and native Maine mud), and sharing lunch, fellowship, and song.

Because the “All Maine Gathering” is an every other year event, our initial announcement that we would be hosting this on May 7 was not accurate. Instead everyone is invited to the Emerging from Hibernation celebration.

Please put these dates on your calendar.

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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
Wanted - Greeters for In-Person Worship

Portland Friends are now gathering in person for worship even as we experiment with a hybrid Zoom and in Person format that started this past week. The Welcoming Task group is seeking at least five people to pair up with the five current volunteers - two people each week from now through June. The new Welcoming Committee will begin in July and you will be able to sign up again or you may request to begin in July and serve for the coming year. The responsibilities of the Greeters are listed below.

Members and Attenders are encouraged to volunteer and to indicate the week of the month you would like to Greet. Two people will be assigned to each week of the month, one person at each door of the meetinghouse. Please contact Dorothy Grannell if you are interested (207) 233-6587 or email stemp41@gmail.com.

Duties of the Greeter, 10:20 - 11:00 a.m.

Make sure the meeting room is ready Window shades up; Lights and fan on; Audio system for hearing impaired turned on (Box is on shelf on left in office, turn on button and it will light up); Check the handheld microphone and turn it on; All doors to meeting room open until 10:45, when you close both sets of doors

Welcome everyone warmly! Wear your nametag and the “turn off cell phone” button, found in the office; During Covid, remind Friends that all are asked to wear masks and offer one if the attender does not have one. PFM asks all who attend to be vaccinated or have a negative test result in the last 24 hour. Rapid tests are available in the office area if needed; With newcomers, show them the guestbook and information pamphlets. If possible, introduce them to a regular attender; If children arrive, let the adult with them know where and how child care operates.

Promote quiet and in the lobby and hallway after 10:45a; Late arrivals wait until 11:00 or when the children exit; After all have entered, the greeter may join the meeting; Return the “turn off cell phone” button.

On first Sunday please be available at 10:30 to greet and hold worshipers until the end of Meeting for Worship for the Conduct of Business.

Touching the Spirit in the Fourth Month of 2022

Most of my drawings are architectural in nature. The drawings are layers upon layers. Silence plays a big portion of my practice. Drawing, by nature, is a silent exercise. I often wait for a message, just like in meeting for worship, to make the next stroke. I have always thought of my art as a spiritual endeavor. — Maggie Fehr
Annual report to the meeting concerning the Multi-Faith group of Portland

I (Fritz Weiss) participate in the Multi-Faith group of Portland as a Public Friend, endorsed by PFM. This endorsement includes the responsibility to report to the meeting annually.

The Multi-Faith Group is an informal gathering of faith leaders from spiritual communities in and around Portland. The group formed about six years ago as individual faith leaders recognized the need for spiritual communities to support each other and to be clear about our Truth in the face of the challenges facing our world. The group includes mainline Christian Churches, Jewish congregations, the Buddhist community, the Bahai community and individuals in chaplaincy service. I am grateful that Portland Friends have supported my involvement.

It is a privilege to gather with individuals who share a vocation to their faithful work. Consistently this group has provided mutual support and encouragement as congregations have struggled with concerns specific to each congregation and with concerns shared across communities. For the past two years, much of the focus has been on how we hold the life and spiritual struggles, and the pastoral care of our communities in the time of the pandemic. We have also shared how we hold concerns for the climate crises, for welcoming new Mainers, for being open and affirming congregations, for reproductive justice, for supporting self determination of the Maine tribes and for supporting the families in our communities.

Specific ways in which Portland Friends have been involved with the initiatives of the Multi Faith Group include:

- Participating in the planting of a tree at Gilsland Farm as a memorial for Mainers who have died of Covid during the pandemic. A dedication ceremony is planned for this May.
- Participating in the city wide Thanksgiving eve prayer service. This year Judy Spross shared a Wendell Berry poem.
- Attending and participating in the MLK day reading each of the past two years.
- Attending and participating in the Family Pride celebration at Saint Ansgar
- Diana White has been attending and participating in the clergy mingles hosted by the Maine Association of New Americans and connecting with pastors of immigrant congregations.
- Meg Klepack has connected with Preble Street’s Faith Action Network.

The Multi-Faith Group has just connected with the Equality Community Center of Portland which is rehabbing a former bank building on Casco St. in Portland to serve as a center where social justice non-profits – especially those serving the LGBTQ community – can co-locate and where groups can gather safely. There will be more opportunities arising out of this initiative.

Please contact me with questions, concerns or ideas.

Respectfully submitted, Fritz Weiss

Portland Friends Meeting Email Lists

Anyone is welcome to join our email lists! Announcements about worship, documents for Meeting for Worship for the Conduct of Business are sent via the “Life of the Meeting” list.

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

Once you have joined, to send a message to “Life of the Meeting” use pfm-life-of-the-meeting@googlegroups.com and, to send a message to “Wider Community” use pfm-wider-community@googlegroups.com.

Next Meeting Resources Discernment Session:
1pm on May 22

House in Falmouth for rent for the month of June: Furnished house in Falmouth (3-4 bedrooms, 1 1/2 baths, fenced backyard, pets OK). Available for month of June only. Walk to beach, Falmouth Town Landing, and market. House is on a dead end street with the Falmouth Nature Preserve is accessible through trail at end of the road. Please contact Stefanie Fairchild if interested at 272-6500 or stefaniefairchild@yahoo.com.
Thoughts about Family Promise and Food
by Ann Dodd-Collins

I have a dream that some day in the not too distant future we will all be able to meet and to share a meal together in the Portland Friends Meetinghouse. But it won’t be like any meal we’ve had before. There will be whole fish in a savory tomato sauce, large bowls filled with mounds of fufu, cassava leaves, and fried plantains. It will be a meal that would be served to us if we were to visit the countries from which many of our Family Promise families come. And maybe, as we stared at the fish staring back at us and felt awkward rolling the fufu into small balls and dipping them into the dish of cassava leaves, we’ll wish for roasted chicken and mashed potatoes instead. And maybe we'll realize just how much our families miss their traditional foods and how providing culturally appropriate food is a way of saying, “Welcome. We are glad you have come to Portland, Maine. What can we do to make your transition a little easier?”

Greater Portland Family Promise began providing culturally appropriate food once a month to 25-30 Family Promise families in the fall of 2021. At first the intention was only to provide food to supplement General Assistance food vouchers and SNAP benefits during the holidays, but the need was great, the food deeply appreciated, and the Food Distribution Program continues. In February GPFP, with support from Portland Friends Meeting, applied for and received a Special Focus Grant of $10,000 from the Obadiah Brown Benevolent Fund for their Food Distribution Program. Thanks to grants and in-kind donations from OBBF, Good Shepherd Food Bank, Portland Public Schools, the Cumberland County Food Security Council, Wayside Food Programs, Preble Street, and Fresh Food for All African Mobile Market, the program will continue well into the next year. Most of the money from the OBBF grant will be used to purchase culturally appropriate food, but some was used to purchase a freezer for storing goat meat, fish, cassava leaves, and other frozen items.

Paua Rossval and Sue Nelson have joined the food distribution team. They help with packing food – which often begins with counting onions, peppers, apples, and other produce so that it can be distributed equitably. And once the packing is done, they help deliver the boxes and bags to our families. If you would like to help, please contact me. We usually meet at St. Luke’s on the last Wednesday of the month to pack food for 25-35 families.

Food distribution on March 2
The new freezer which was filled with chicken and cassava leaves.
Ann’s car filled with milk, produce, white bread, and cereal from Preble Street

Food distribution on March 2

Young Adult Friends Retreat: a weekend long gathering for Quakers & Quaker-curious seekers ages 18-35

Learn more here: https://neym.org/events-calendar/2022/04/young-adult-friends-retreat
Register here: https://lu.ma/YAF_spring2022

Young Adult Friends (YAF) retreats are an opportunity for young adults (18-35) to "try on" Quaker spiritual practices, connect with peers in the Quaker movement, enjoy time spent in joy & worshipful togetherness, bring a spiritual lens to the decisions in our lives, and cultivate our spiritual friendships with one another.
You are invited to the Friends School Annual Auction!

We will be holding a Silent Auction Mon., May 2- Fri., May 6 and then Community Celebration on Saturday, May 7 from 10am-1pm.

The online auction will be “open” for 5 days prior, and will be full of wonderful, creative items to bid on. You will be able to invite family and friends near and far to bid.

Then, join us to pick up auction items, bid on a few special silent auction items, and enjoy one another’s company! The outdoor in person celebration at FSP will include live music with the Duquette Band, delicious food from Terlingua and LB Kitchen, and plenty of family friendly activities! We can’t wait to see you!

We hope that you will consider making a donation towards to auction this year!

The Auction is Friend School of Portland’s most important fundraising event. Proceeds go directly to FSP’s Annual Fund, which supports the most essential aspects of FSP - supplements tuition aid and supports our amazing teachers’ salaries and classroom activities.

We are collecting auction items for this year’s event!

The deadline for donation items is Tuesday, April 26!

Get the creative juices flowing!

Think of a way you love to spend your time, build community and being kind to others - is it sitting around a campfire?

Donate a professionally built stone fire pit. Is it taking time to relax with family? Donate a week stay at a cabin. Is it enjoying delicious homemade food? Donate a homemade pie or cake! Is it spending time in nature learning new things? Donate a plant ID or mushroom walk. Is it making art? Donate a photograph, watercolor, piece of art made by you.

Feel free to fill out our online donation form here: https://forms.gle/z7qvNWput4qTtaDK6

Or fill out your own donation form on the next page.

If delivering in person, please bring donations to FSP or be in touch with Brooke to drop off on a Sunday at Portland Friends Meeting.

brooke@friendsschoolportland.org or 207-558-6214.
Auction Donation Form

Donation: _____________________________________________________________

Value of Item: $___________________________________________________________

Date of Expiration _____/_____/______ * Donation will be valid until May 7th, 2023 unless otherwise noted here.

Please describe the donation:
____________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________

Any restrictions:______________________________________________________________

Are you hosting a master class/gathering? This is an activity that can include at least 4 people. If so please add how many people this will be for and what is the proposed date & time.

How many people can be invited: (minimum 4)__________ Is this for adults, children, all ages?__________

Proposed Date and Time (1): _______________________________________________________________

If form is not accompanied by the item please check one.
☐ No Item (please make gift certificate) ☐ Needs to be Picked-up ☐ I’ll Deliver to FSP
   (Pick up/delivery should occur on or before Tuesday, April 26, 2022)

Donation Contact Person: _____________________________________________________________

Business Name: __________________________________________________________________________

Donor You Would Like Listed: _____________________________________________________________

Address: ______________________________________________________________________________

City/State/Zip: __________________________________________________________________________

Phone: ____________________    E-mail: ____________________________

Friends School of Portland is a tax-exempt, 501(c)(3) charitable organization (EIN 20-3299655). FSP did not provide any goods or services in consideration, in whole or in part for your contribution. Your gift is deductible to the extent allowable by law. A letter of acknowledgment will be sent to you and will serve as your receipt.
Portland Friends Meeting
1837 Forest Ave
Portland, ME 04103

Address Service Requested

Next newsletter deadline:
Tuesday, May 3, 11:53pm

submissions: pfmnewsletter@grantwinners.net