

Portland Friends Meeting Newsletter

First Month 2024

Meeting for Worship: 10:00 am Sundays (childcare available)

Note change in time to 10:00 am starting in January.



1837 Forest Avenue
Portland, Maine 04103
portlandfriendsmeeting.org
207-200-6544

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Connections

Clerk

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PFM.recordingclerk@gmail.com

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Treasurer, Special Funds

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Newsletter submissions

David N. Hingston dhingston@comcast.net

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The social order must be profoundly transformed and adjusted to the demands of justice and fairness for all men. But whatever happens to the social and economic order, the quality of the spirit of those who compose the social structure will always be the essential matter. No reorganization, whether gradual or revolutionary, will make a good world unless the units themselves are good. Even now, in a world far from being rightly fashioned, we can help toward the reorganization of it by a faithful and consistent practice of simplicity of life, sincerity of heart, brotherliness of spirit toward all men, and confident reliance on the intrinsic forces of the soul in co-operation with God.

~ Rufus M. Jones, "The spiritual message of the Religious Society of Friends" in World Conference (1937) Report of Commission I, pp. 7-16

Calendar

Upcoming Events

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Saturday, Jan. 27, 4:30 pm | PFS Strategic Plan: Rooting Down, Branching Out |
| Thursday, February 1 | Friends School Summer Camp registration opens |
| Sunday, Feb. 4, Rise of Meeting (RoM) | "Ministries" discussion, PFM Meeting House |
| Saturday, Feb. 10, 2:00 pm | Memorial Service for Kate Potter, Friends School |
| Sunday, Feb. 11, RoM | Special session on draft State of the Society report |
| Sunday, Mar. 3, RoM | Meeting for Worship for the Conduct of Business |
| March 8-10, schedule TBD | PFM Retreat, Meeting House |
| June 30-July 6 | Friends General Conference, Haverford PA
(https://www.fgcquaker.org/fgcprograms/the-gathering/) |

Every Month

- | | |
|--|---|
| Every Sunday, 10:00 am
Note change to 10:00 am starting in January | Meeting for Worship* at the Meetinghouse and separately on Zoom |
| Every Wednesday, 7:00 pm | Young Adult Friends Mid-Week Worship
email yaf@portlandfriendsmeeting.org for location |
| Every Weekday, 10:30 am | Meeting for Worship on Zoom* |
| First Thursdays and Third Tuesdays, 7:00 pm | Meeting for Healing on Zoom* |

*contact Clerk for online Meeting for Worship links



**Portland Friends Meeting
Minutes of Meeting for Worship for the Conduct of Business
January 14, 2024**

Peter Woodrow, Clerk
Rob Levin, Recording

Members and attenders of Portland Friends Meeting gathered in worship at 11:40 am. Some 30 Friends gathered, in person at the Meetinghouse and remotely via Zoom. Clerk Peter Woodrow opened by noting that we were meeting on unceded Wabanaki land and offering the following words from Martin Luther King, Jr.:

"Hatred paralyzes life; love releases it. Hatred confuses life; love harmonizes it. Hatred darkens life; love illuminates it."

Following a period of silent worship, Peter welcomed all and thanked Rob Levin for serving as Recording Clerk, Lyn Ballou for holding the Meeting in the Light, and to Luke Hankins for technical support.

1. REVIEW OF MINUTES

The Meeting approved the minutes of Meeting of December 3, 2023, without modification, with thanks to Lise Wagner for stepping in to record.

2. UPDATE FROM YREC: TEEN COORDINATOR AND SPLITTING ROLES

Bart Czyz spoke on behalf of Youth Religious Education Committee, and YREC's report is attached [Attachment 1].

Bart shared about the challenges facing the youth religious education and nursery program over the past few years. Currently, about fifteen youth are participating in life of Meeting in some way, down substantially from the pre-covid era. Anywhere from zero to five children show up for First Day School on any given Sunday. The biggest challenge right now are the two unfilled positions, Youth Religious Education Coordinator and Nursery Coordinator, with no applicants appearing to step forward.

In this context, it was thrilling and energizing for Heather Denkmire to follow a Leading to propose gathering the Meeting's teenagers together for regular group activities. YREC consulted with the Financial Stewardship Committee about this proposal, and they confirmed that no additional funding would be required, as YREC has flexibility to use its already budgeted amount differently than as stated in the budget.

The Meeting enthusiastically approved the proposal for Heather Denkmire to organize a teen-led group, initially as a five-month experiment.

YREC is also considering whether a similar approach could be extended to other age groups or other configurations of the youth programs, so that in effect the

Youth Religious Education Coordinator position would be split into two or three smaller positions. Might a smaller role be more appealing for someone to take on? Bart requested feedback on this concept, and members spoke generally in support of the idea.

Bart also reiterated the need for new YREC members, to ensure the capacity and energy of the committee going forward. There remains one unfilled YREC position, now that Lyn Ballou has offered to join.

The Meeting approved the addition of Lyn Ballou to the Youth Religious Education Committee.

3. INPUT INTO THE STATE OF SOCIETY REPORT

Beth Bussiere-Nichols invited us to begin our annual reflection on where we stand as a spiritual community. Beth led us into a worship sharing space with the following prompts:

Where was Spirit at work in our Meeting over the past year?

Where have we felt sparks of joy?

And where might we be feeling stuck or coming up short?

In response, Friends offered some feedback:

- We are seeing many new faces, but there are also old faces we're not seeing, and some of us are hoping to reach out and reconnect with them.
- There was a feeling that perhaps we are starting to come back together after a period of separation. The Welcoming Committee survey sparked many ideas about how we can further connect with each other socially and spiritually, with no agendas or task lists.
- Similarly, there is a sense that we are feeling a relaxing of tensions that existed over the past few years. The two Meetings for Business in June and September, at which Friends shared deeply from the heart, may have contributed to a spirit of renewed fellowship and hopefulness. We still face important issues that require discernment, but we are working on rebuilding our community, to give us resilience to deal with these issues.
- A Friend expressed gratitude for our Afterthoughts practice, where we have an opportunity to share our experiences in Meeting for Worship. This practice feels like a growing of Spirit and Beloved Community.
- Conversations continue around how we as a Meeting can and should nurture each other's spiritual ministries. One Friend expressed thankfulness for seeing how certain ministries have emerged over the past year. In particular, the deepening of our Afterthoughts practice, the expanding Adult Religious Education offerings, and a new welcoming pamphlet.

- We are also seeing a helpful shift in our worship and business by centering on where we are spiritually led. One example is the change in the timing of Meeting for Business to allow for more spaciousness.

Beth and Mags Fehr invited others to reach out with more ideas and suggestions in response to the queries. After compiling all feedback, they will offer a first reading of the State of Society report at a special session following Meeting for Worship on February 11. That will be an opportunity to comment on the draft and to add further reflections. (There is no Meeting for Business in February.) The final State of Society report will then be presented for consideration at the March Meeting for Business.

4. ALLOCATION FROM THE SHARED WITNESS FUND FOR VELASCO SISTER MEETING COMMITTEE

Ann Dodd-Collins presented for the Velasco Sister Meeting Committee to ask for \$3,500 to be allocated from the Shared Witness Fund to the Sister Meeting Fund. See the attached report [Attachment 2] for more details, which explains that the committee's original request for \$4,000 in the 2023 budget was deferred and never conclusively decided. The Shared Witness Coordinators were consulted with this proposal, although they do not make official recommendations. Our new Co-Treasurer noted that 2023 ended up with a surplus for the year, largely because of lower spending. Others asked whether Cuba travel should come from the Shared Witness Fund, and whether we needed to make up for any missed 2023 budget request. Following this discussion,

The Meeting approved the allocation of \$3,500 from the Shared Witness Fund to the Sister Meeting Fund held at Durham Friends Meeting.

5. PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH A FUND FOR SUFFERINGS

Jay O'Hara presented on behalf of himself, Fritz Weiss, and Rob Levin, who put together a proposal for the Meeting to establish a Fund for Sufferings. The proposal was considered and approved by Ministry and Council and is now before the entire Meeting. See the attached proposal [Attachment 3].

Friends have followed a tradition for 350 years of supporting those who follow their conscience. The current proposal is to administer the Fund for Sufferings in a way similar to the existing Special Needs Fund. People serving in certain positions (yet to be determined) would be authorized to approve uses of the fund on a timely basis. Ministry and Council will return to this question to clarify the specifics.

Any unused amount from any given year would not roll over or accrue to succeeding years. The PFM Fund for Sufferings would be in addition to NEYM's Fund, which has not been replenished in number of years. Friends affirmed the need for nimbleness, time sensitivity and flexibility in administering the fund, for

a process that is easy to navigate and doesn't require waiting for clearness committees or Meeting for Business approval. We also clarified that the Fund could be used to support family members, not just individuals.

The Meeting approved the establishment of a Fund for Sufferings as set forth in the written proposal, initially in the amount of \$2,000 per year in the 2024 operating budget. Ministry and Council was asked to develop a mechanism for authorizing and approving uses of the fund.

6. CONSIDER THE NOMINATION OF DICK STRATTON AS TREASURER

The Meeting approved with gratitude the appointment of Dick Stratton as a Co-Treasurer, to replace Kathy Beach.

7. CLOSING WORSHIP

The Meeting then rose at about 1:12 pm, to meet again for the Conduct of Business on March 3, 2024, according to Divine will.

Attachment 1

Report from the Youth Religious Education Committee (YREC) January 2024

Many families with children in our meeting report that this past fall felt like the first “normal” start to a school year since the pandemic shut down. On that occasion, YREC made a report to the meeting in October that summarized the journey of the YREC programs since the pandemic shutdown of 2020 and attempted to place that journey within the context of the last two decades. YREC reported that about 15 young people remain “in the orbit” of the meeting. Weekly attendance ranges between 0 and 5 youth.

YREC is unable to find volunteers who can lead First Day School on a regular basis and is extraordinarily grateful for the rotation of volunteers who have allowed YREC to offer First Day School every Sunday. The individuals serving in YREC’s two compensated positions (YRE Coordinator and Nursery Care Provider) departed. In light of the decreased youth attendance, YREC asked for confirmation of the meeting’s interest in continuing to fund those two positions. YREC also asked the meeting for volunteers for the committee and for the First Day School program. YREC observed that they have been unable to fill two committee positions for over a year.

In response to that report, YREC understood at that time the following from the Meeting: First, the youth programs remain important to the meeting. Second, the meeting wishes to continue to fund the positions. Third, at this time, individuals in the Meeting are generally not in a position to either lead or to commit their time to YREC (though one person volunteered for the committee directly after the meeting). Finally, upon the observation that there is a group of teens interested in gathering, YREC heard a suggestion that perhaps a teen group leader could be compensated.

Since that report, YREC has not received any applications for the YRE Coordinator or Nursery Care Provider positions. YREC offered First Day School through December but will probably not be able to continue doing so without a coordinator and/or more volunteers to the committee. In meetings during the fall, YREC examined the challenges of reconnecting our programs with youth who remain “in the orbit” of meeting. During these discussions, YREC observed that a rotation of volunteers for First Day School has allowed us to offer First Day School every Sunday, but has also had two consequences:

1. A rotation of teachers does not allow youth to form a relationship with a consistent, predictable adult face. That relationship is important and motivates attendance.
2. In a time of sporadic attendance, offering First Day School every Sunday appears to make it less likely that kids can predict that peers will be present at First Day School. Being with peers is important and motivates attendance.

Shortly after YREC’s report in October, a parent of a teen, who is also a long-time member, approached us with a leading to gather the teen group anew, if that leading could be supported with some compensation. That leading was reinforced by the wonderful contributions of a group of teens in Advent Garden. In discussions, YREC found this person’s leading to be well-grounded, well-informed, and full of spirit. YREC also observed, based on feedback from families, that a successful teen group would need to meet on some evenings in

addition to Sunday mornings. We seasoned this leading with treasurers and the clerk of Financial Oversight, as it involved compensation for a new role and using some existing YREC funds differently than indicated in the approved budget. That leading prompted a further idea that YREC brings to the meeting today.

- **Request for decision:** *YREC would like to compensate a teen coordinator \$22/hour for a total of 25 hours (about 5 hours per month) on a trial basis from January to May.* That compensation would be pulled from existing First Day School and YRE Coordinator budget lines. In the spring, YREC would examine the results of this experiment and make a further recommendation about this role. This decision raises important larger questions about when work for the meeting should be compensated, which YREC recommends could be visited in the spring. ***Does the Meeting approve of this experiment?***
- **Request for input:** The proposal of a compensated teen coordinator suggested to YREC that ***the functions of the unfilled YRE Coordinator role could be filled by splitting that role into smaller, more manageable roles.*** For example, the hours of the YRE coordinator could be divided between three lead teachers who each fully claim an age group (young, middles, and teens), gather that group, and plan and lead two classes per month. There are a handful of youth in each age group still “in the orbit” of meeting. YREC believes they might be gathered again if a steady adult face would claim them. Compensation could support the commitment needed from an adult to do that. Further, if we do not fill the coordinator role or fill compensated teacher roles, the youth programs will go on hiatus. ***What does the meeting think of making an experiment on a trial basis?***

Attachment 2

Proposal for Funding the Portland and Durham Friends Sister Meeting Relationship with Velasco Friends Church

For consideration at Meeting for Business January 14, 2024

After consultation with the convenors of the Shared Witness Fund, members of the Cuba Sister Meeting committee recommend that \$3,500 be taken from the Shared Witness Fund and added to the Sister Meeting account which is under the care of Durham Friends Meeting.

Background:

The Cuba sister meeting relationship is a shared witness of Portland Friends Meeting. That has been affirmed in several minutes over the last three years and at our Meeting for Worship for the Conduct of Business on Sunday, 5 November 2023.

The Cuba sister meeting requested \$4,000 in the 2023 operating budget but that request was deferred indefinitely.

At the Meeting for Business on Sunday, 3 December 2023, Portland Friends approved the 2024 operating budget which included \$4,000 for the Cuba sister meeting relationship.

This proposal simply asks to complete the missing piece by funding the request for financial support which was made in 2023.

		PFM Operating Budget	PFM Special Witness Fund	Durham Friends Meeting
2022	Request	\$4,000		
	Approved	\$1,400 (1)		\$4,000
2023	Request	\$4,000	\$3,500	
	Approved	\$500		\$4,000
2024	Request	\$4,000		
	Approved	\$4,000		
2025	Request	\$4,000		
	Approved			

Notes:

(1) To fund the February 2023 trip to Velasco, PFM contributed \$1,400 from unspent funds. The rest of the money came from grants and fundraising.

Attachment 3

Proposal for a PFM Fund for Suffering

Submitted by Fritz Weiss, Jay O'Hara and Rob Levin

Presented to Meeting for Business, January 14, 2024

Introduction:

Friends have been providing financial support to those who suffer due to their faithful witness since at least 1675 when Britan Yearly Meeting established a mechanism to support those Friends who were imprisoned or refusing to pay tithes. Recently, PFM Leadings Grants were made to cover court imposed fines and legal fees for Jay O'Hara and to provide contingency funds to cover bail costs and possible fines for the Interfaith Prayer Circle witness against gun violence this month. The Leadings Committee has indicated their support for establishing a Fund for Suffering and has shared this idea with the Financial Stewardship Committee (FSC).

Definition:

The Fund for Sufferings is available to support Friends who suffer as a result of their faithful witness, and is intended to respond to urgent needs precipitated by such witness. The Fund is not to be used for releasing ministers or for other ongoing expenses, except where needed to ensure continuity of support (for example, legal expenses for a prolonged period, when available).

Examples of time-sensitive expenses that might receive support from the Fund for Sufferings include but are not necessarily limited to: legal expenses resulting from nonviolent direct action and holy obedience/civil disobedience, including bail and expenses related to arrest, property damage/loss and incarceration; legal proceedings or financial penalties related to conscientious objection to military service or war tax refusal; and medical expenses resulting from injuries sustained or illness contracted in the course of public witness. We note that it is usual for Friends engaged in public witness to have participated in a clearness process in preparation for the witness.

Eligibility:

The Fund for Sufferings will be available to members and attenders of Portland Friends Meeting, but may be extended to others (for example, others, including people of other faiths, participating in a Quaker-led activity) based on the discernment and discretion of the Clerks of Ministry and Council in consultation (see authorization).

Funding Mechanism:

Our recommendation is to handle the fund similarly to how the Special Needs Fund is handled. There would be a \$2,000 expense item in the operating budget, which may be used as the occasion arises.

Authorization/Approval:

If Friends approve establishment of the Fund, Ministry and Counsel will develop a specific process for receiving and approving requests and bring it for consideration at Meeting for Business.

Treasurer's Report for December 2023

Dear Friends,

December has been a month of transition as Dick Stratton takes on the role of Co-Treasurer along with Jane Mullen. Kathy Beach is stepping away from the role of Co-Treasurer but will remain on the Financial Stewardship Committee.

Portland Friends Meeting Report of the 2023 Operating Budget		
INCOME	Budget	Actual
Donations	65,080	59,890
Transfer from Invested Funds	30,000	24,600
Rent	835	7,193
TOTAL INCOME	95,915	91,683
EXPENSES		
Meetinghouse & Grounds	27,950	32,373
Youth of the Meeting	24,990	18,155
Care of PFM Community	15,625	6,187
Other Areas of Focus	17,650	16,000
Contributions Beyond Our Meeting	9,700	9,700
TOTAL EXPENSES	95,915	82,415
Net Income less Expenses	0	9,268

A summary of the 2023 Operating Budget is to the left. Complete figures for the year are available on three spreadsheets [HERE](#).

- 1) Summary
- 2) Details
- 3) Fund balances as of 12/31/23

Jane Mullen has compiled the following report regarding donations in 2023.

Donations Received in Support of the Operating Budget - 2023

Full Year 2023

Total donations received in 2023 = \$59,700

- This is up 16% v. 2022
- 8% below the \$ 65,080 budgeted for 2023, and 9% below our 2020 high of \$65,300

Influences:

- Twice during 2023 donations received exceeded \$10,000/month, vs. five such instances total in the past 72 months
- Growth in the number of individual donations of \$1,000 or above received during the year (from 5 in 2018 to 9 in 2023)

December 2023

Total donations received during the month = \$15,842

- Over the past 6 years, this is the 2nd largest amount received in one month
- \$15,842 equals 27% of the total donations received during 2023

Influences:

- Incremental donations made in support of the operating budget in December, in response to the late November appeal for donations
- Five donations of \$1,000 or above were received during December

Questions regarding the operating budget can be directed to Dick Stratton at rstratton@megalink.net. Questions regarding donations can be directed to Jane Mullen at jimmmaine@aol.com

Many thanks to everyone for your continued support of Portland Friends Meeting!

Letter from PFM to TD Bank Regarding Closure of Accounts



December 5, 2023

Bharat Masrani, CEO
TD Bank
1701 Marlton Pike East
200
Cherry Hill, NJ 08003

Dear Mr. Masrani and Officers of TD Bank,

Portland Friends Meeting, the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), had both a checking and a Money Market account with TD Bank for the past 20 years. We have now closed our accounts at TD Bank.

Taking this step has been on our minds for several years. Although we appreciate the good customer service TD Bank has provided, we are no longer going to be part of a financial institution that invests in fossil fuels or fossil fuel infrastructure while the need to move to renewable energy becomes increasingly essential. We are no longer going to be part of financial institutions that are not lending to the small businesses that are the engines of jobs and innovation for our economy.

We are now satisfying our Meeting's banking needs with a small community financial institution that is more in line with our moral and ethical beliefs.

There are steps that TD Bank can take to improve its impact on people and the planet, especially your role in financing the fossil fuel industry. We urge you to join other banks, investment firms and corporations in adopting the principle in [The Task Force on Climate-Related Financial Disclosures](#) or the [Platform for Carbon Accounting Financials](#) to measure the carbon intensity of your loans and investment portfolio. You could also create fossil-fuel-free banking products to meet consumer demand.

Thank you for considering these important and timely steps as you move forward.

Sincerely yours,



Katherine Beach, Co-Treasurer for Portland Friends Meeting
Jo Linder, Clerk of Financial Stewardship Committee at PFM

Welcoming Committee Report

Genna Ulrich and a wide group of Portland Friends have created a new Welcoming Booklet which will start to be given to newcomers this month as they arrive for worship. It has the approval of the Welcoming Committee but regular attenders are encouraged to read it and to share reactions and comments with Genna for possible improvement. Another volume may be produced later this year that will answer frequently asked questions about the workings of our meeting and membership. We are grateful for Genna's leading and dedication to the project.

PFM had a wonderful game night on January 5. Thanks to the efforts of the Eller Fitze family a good time was had by all who attended. A Men's Retreat was held on January 13, headed up by Denis Lachman. Plans for a meeting wide retreat are in process, but we have not yet had an update as to date or place. The fellowship activities are going well with many Friends stepping up to encourage our community to get to know each other better.

We are still seeking at least one more committee member. Please see Dorothy or Lyn if you are able to assist.

Current Ministry Care Committees at PFM

For Jay O'Hara	Peter Woodrow Jessica Eller Emily Troll Fritz Weiss
For Ann Dodd-Collins	Genna Ulrich Paula Rossvall Rania Cambell-Cobb
For Heather Denkmire	Kya Smith Lyn Ballou Fritz Weiss
For Sally Farneth	Dorothy Grannell Paula Rossvall Christine Fletcher.

Request from Friends Camp

Friends Camp is seeking Registered Nurses! FC is looking for RNs who are available to help out on a day or two throughout the summer, or who could work a two-week session in July or August. If you are interested in learning more, please reach out to Friends Camp at director@friendscamp.org or by calling 207-877-4302.

Friends Camp is a Quaker youth camp of the New England Yearly Meeting of Friends. We offer overnight camp sessions for youth ages 7-17 on China Lake in South China, Maine.

Update on Family Shelters

The State Street Church in Portland is planning to open an emergency shelter for homeless families in early March. They will need volunteers to help staff the shelter, one in the evening to welcome families, and two overnight.

Some of you will remember that State Street opened a makeshift shelter in their parlor last winter. Portland Friends was asked to help staff that shelter and we have been asked to help again this year. The new shelter will provide separate sleeping spaces for four families, bathrooms with multiple toilets and showers, a laundry room, and a sleeping area for volunteers. The remodeling has taken much longer than expected and not all inspections have been completed, but it is finally coming together. Once the State Street shelter opens, it will stay open till the end of the school year.

Notice will be sent once the opening date for the State Street shelter is known and where volunteers can sign up to help. In the meantime, if you have any questions, please contact Ann Dodd-Collins at dodco@gmail.com or 207-232-9576.

And before you ask, yes, Greater Portland Family Promise is still running a family shelter at Williston Immanuel. We moved three families into housing the first week of January and have three more moves planned for this month. As soon as a family moves out of the shelter, another family moves in, keeping our numbers at 36 people sheltered 24/7..

News from Portland Friends School

1. Friends School Rolling Admissions

Friends School of Portland is still accepting students for 2024-2025 school year on a rolling basis for limited openings. Interested in learning more? Reach out to Enrollment Director, Megan Campbell by email:

megan@friendsschoolportland.org



2. Friends School Summer Camp

Friends School Summer Camp registration opens on Thursday, February 1. Spaces fill quickly, learn more about the registration process online here:

<https://www.friendsschoolportland.org/new-page-2>

FSP is also hiring summer camp counselors! Interested in learning more? Reach out to Camp Director, Laura, at laura@friendsschoolportland.org !

3. Strategic Plan: Potluck & Contra dance at FSP Saturday, January 27 from 4:30 pm to 7:00 pm

Friends School of Portland's Board invites families, graduates, friends, and Friends to learn more about our new 5-year Strategic Plan. This will be a time that we share a bit more about our planning, invite family and friends to enjoy a meal, and join in the fun with music & dancing.

"My family loves contra dancing because it opens up a whole new way of being together with each other and in community. There's a unique and spontaneous joy that goes along with just being present in the moment and going with the flow -- not worrying about whether we know the tune or where to put our feet. You begin wherever you are and make a special experience together -- somewhere between the caller's words, the laughter of strangers and friends, and the fiddle tunes circling on repeat. It's pure magic!"

-Shana Starobin, FSP Parent to first and fourth-grade students

Whether this is your first contra dance or one of many... we hope you will join us at FSP for a contra dance and potluck on Saturday, January 27.

Bring your dancing shoes, your instruments, and delicious dishes of food to share!

4:30 pm Potluck

5:15 pm Strategic Plan: Rooting Down, Branching Out Remarks

5:30 pm Music and Contra dance

7:00 pm Last Song!

Learn more about the 5-year strategic plan by visiting FSP's website here:

<https://www.friendsschoolportland.org/strategicplan>



Climate Justice Camp

Although we still have a long time before summer returns, it is never too early to start planning, especially when your young people are involved. This year, the BTS Center is thrilled to be offering a Climate Justice Camp for teens in partnership with Pilgrim Lodge on beautiful Lake Cobbosseecontee in West Gardiner, Maine. Registration is now open, so please spread the word to any high schoolers you know!



Friends World News: January 2024



Celebrations for the 400th anniversary of the birth of Quaker co-founder George Fox will take place throughout the year. Many of these courses and events can be joined online, from around the world.

These include reflections on the legacy of George Fox at Yearly Meetings; a range of online courses which include liberal, conservative and evangelical perspectives; a week of celebration of the lives of Margaret Fell & George Fox at Swarthmoor Hall; and a special exhibition at the Quaker Tapestry museum.

[View all George Fox 400th Birthday Events](#)

There are also still places available for the World Plenary Meeting, taking place in South Africa and online from 5-12 August 2024.

All Yearly Meetings associated with FWCC are invited to send nominees. Open Places are also available.

The registration deadline for in-person places is 31st January 2024. Registration for online places will close on 31st May 2024. Book your place here today.

[Register for the World Plenary Meeting](#)



Address Service Requested

Portland Friends Meeting
1837 Forest Ave
Portland, ME 04103

Next newsletter deadline:

Wednesday, February 7, 11:58 pm

submissions: dhingston@comcast.net

Please note "PFM Newsletter" in the subject line.

NOT ENOUGH MUSIC IN YOUR LIFE?

—Peter Woodrow

In my so-called retirement, I have been engaging more with music on two fronts—and both groups welcome more people.

SING! Sea Change Chorale is a social justice choir that produces benefit concerts for local non-profit and social justice organizations. We sing a variety of music—all of it fun, moving and spiritually uplifting. Several Portland Friends are involved. Open House on February 1st, 6:30 pm at Park Danforth, 777 Stephens Avenue, Portland. www.seachangechorale.org

GET BACK TO AN OLD INSTRUMENT? Southern Maine New Horizons Band is a wind band specifically designed for people who are coming back to an instrument after a long time or taking up a new instrument. Rank beginners and people with rusty skills all welcome! Rehearsals are Wednesdays at 4:15 to 5:45 at St. Luke's Cathedral on State Street in downtown Portland. Let me know if you are interested.

<https://www.southernmainenewhorizonsband.org/>

