

Worcester Friends Meeting

Religious Society of Friends (Quaker)

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November 2013 - January 2014

QUERIES

Do we allow room for people to honestly expose their wounds? Are we assembling and mobilizing skilled and mature elders with the courage and wisdom to accurately assess problems and pain, coupled with the wisdom and compassion to handle it gently and appropriately within a larger community? How ready is your community to respond when a young or old Friend asks you to bear a burden they can no longer carry alone? How might you be called to serve in this way?

Colin Saxton - General Secretary, Friends United Meeting

Members' Musings

by Clarence Burley

Corporate Spiritual Discernment

What is God saying to Worcester Friends Meeting through our placement in the community, through our voices, through our history? What is God's promised and preferred future for us? Are we living it fully now? Are there directions we've missed? Are we focused on things and work that don't fit God's call to us? Or are we in alignment? What has the Holy Spirit been saying to us? Who are our partners in God's mission?

We are challenged to listen carefully for God's will for our meeting as we take our steps into the next year. Let us spend time in fellowship dwelling in the Spirit together, sharing our hopes and aspirations for our meeting as well as for our own spiritual journeys, expressing our concerns for the future, and celebrating the ways in which God has shown up in our midst.

This corporate discernment is listening to the community, listening to each other, listening to our historical ebbs and flows and through this context - listening to God. We invite you to be a part of this listening and sharing process. It is a process of discovery.



January 21, 1661 - George Fox and ten other Friends wrote the Declaration of 1660 to convince the king that Quakers were not a threat because they did not believe in the use of violence. They hoped to end persecution of Quakers.

The committee for the revision of New England Yearly Meeting's Faith and Practice has been meeting almost monthly since 2001 under the leadership of its clerk, Jan Hoffman. It first determined that the product of their work should not be just a revision of 1985's: Faith / and / Practice. It wants its work to be best expressed as: FaithandPractice.

In 2003 the revision committee presented a document entitled *A Peculiar People* to describe this unity of faith and life. This paper was well received and may well be incorporated into the final book. Over the years the committee then produced a broad outline in a Table of Contents and periodically six Chapters in the outline that have received preliminary approval by NEYM Sessions.

The committee has also developed a "working paper" called Appendices that has been distributed to Meetings for use and comment. The term "working paper" can be understood in two senses: (1) The committee is still working on it; (2) Monthly Meetings are encouraged to work with the procedures and documentary forms in its various sections. It has bare bones sections on: Records; Archives; Establishing a Monthly Meeting; Membership; Recognition of Gifts and Leadings; Marriage; Death, Dying and Bereavement; Pastoral Care and Clearness Committees; and State Laws Pertaining to Friends in New England. They are ready for "Practice"

and comment by monthly meetings. Each of the sections in the Appendices will be referred to in the five chapters yet to be drafted. These chapters will cover the spiritual basis and the theological development (the "Faith" part) of the practices in the Appendices.

To facilitate the understanding and use of its work, the committee is exploring publication of a book with the NEYM Publications Committee that will be available widely in NEYM both on line and in printed form. It will recap:

A. Committee Texts given preliminary approval:

Preface

1. *Illustrative Experiences of Friends*
2. *Worship*
3. *Corporate Discernment in Meetings for Business*
9. *A Brief History of Friends in New England*
10. *Revisions to this Faith and Practice*
11. *General Advices and Queries*

B. The working paper, *Appendices*

C. The preliminary document, *A Peculiar People*

The book will be available for study, use and comment as the committee goes to work on the remaining chapters.

In the Mailbox



What a wonderful card we received from the New England Yearly Meeting staff!

Row one: Sara Hubner: Information Management Assistant, Beth Collea: Religious Education Coordinator, NiaDwynwn Thomas: Young Friends/Young Adult Friends Coordinator, Frederick Martin: Accounts Manager. Row two: Nat Shed: Friends Camp Director, Jeff Hipp: Communications Director/Office Manager, Gretchen Baker-Smith: Junior High/Junior Yearly Meeting Retreat Coordinator, Noah Baker Merrill: Yearly Meeting Secretary, and Ben Grimaldi: Treasurer. They do an amazing job of providing support for monthly meetings, committees of the Yearly Meeting, and organizing annual sessions.

Welcome Daron Barnard, and Committee Notes

Our Meeting is grateful for the careful guidance and clerking skills of Karen Sargent, who served as the Meeting's Clerk during 2013.



We are pleased that Daron Barnard will serve as our new Clerk. Friends are asked to hold him in the Light as he adjusts to this new opportunity to service. The Gifts and Leading Committee (G&L) has confidence that Daron's intelligence, thoughtful nature, and Quaker upbringing will add to

the Spiritual Life of our community. Mark Sullivan will graciously continue to serve as treasurer. Our Recording Clerk will continue to be Barbara Sullivan, with Katherine Barnard assisting as needed. Clarence Burley continues as the Recorder and Corresponding Clerk for our Meeting. We are fortunate to have these Friends serving our community.

G&L encourages Members and Attenders to broaden their experience of Quaker worship beyond our monthly meeting. The following Quaker Retreat Cen-

ters offer workshops that will expand your Spiritual growth and enrich our Meeting: Woolman Hill in Greenfield, MA, Powell House in NY state (past the Berkshires) and Pendle Hill in Philadelphia. Financial assistance is available. Friends are also encouraged to worship with other Meetings and to attend Yearly Meeting.

For almost a year, our Meeting has been operating with a new structure. Instead of a plethora of committee meetings every month, we now have three committees: Spiritual Life; Peace, Social Concerns and Outreach; and Practical. These committees are "fluid." Friends and Attenders can attend committee meetings according to their leadings and interests, however the Spiritual Life Committee consists of Members of the Meeting.

We are also connected with the wider Quaker world with news and commentary in the *Friends Journal*, which is available online in hard copy. See <http://www.friendsjournal.org> Our Meeting has a subscription to this valuable Quaker magazine, and also to *Quaker Life Magazine*, published by Friends United Press. See: <http://www.fum.org>

American Friends Service Committee Calls for Spirited Action

AFSC invites Friends to join in the following calls:

Creating lasting peace with justice in Isreal and Palestine

January 15, 2014 7:30 – 9 PM

Tory Smith (AFSC) and Tony Bing (Swannanoa Valley Friends Meeting)

How to connect with your local community

February 10, 2014 7:30-9 PM

Jordan Garcia (AFSC) and Danielle Short (Mountain View Friends Meeting)

Ending the New Jim Crow and mass incarceration

March 15, 2014 7:30-9 PM

Lewis Webb (AFSC) and John & Gail Fletcher (Norman Friends Meeting)

Shared Security: A new Quaker vision of U.S. foreign policy

April 14, 2014 7:30-9 PM

Aura Kanegis (AFSC) and Doug Bennett (First Friends Meeitng)

Working for immigrant justice

May 12, 2014 7:30-9 PM

Lori Khamala (AFSC) and other staff

Evaluation: How are we doing? How can we Grow?

June 16, 2014 7:30-9 PM

Lucy Duncan and Madeline Schaefer, Friends Relations staff

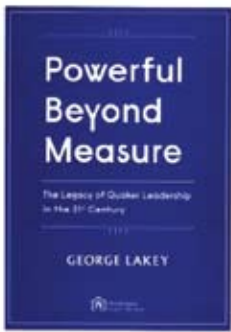
To participate in these conference calls, dial **1-800-740-1260**, and when prompted, enter the access code **2419995#**

AFSC resources are available at: <http://afsc.org/friends/resources>

Follow the Acting in Faith blog: <http://afsc.org/friends>



**American Friends
Service Committee**



Powerful Beyond Measure by George Lakey (Quaker Books of Friends General Conference, 2012) is an edited version of the William Penn Lecture delivered by George Lakey in March, 2011. George Lakey is a member of Central Philadelphia Monthly Meeting, who is described as a “trainer, organizer, author, sociologist, professor, and social change

leader.” I was fortunate to participate in George’s workshop *Quakers and Class*, a multi-day program, at the FGC Gathering at Bowling Green University in 2011.

In *Powerful Beyond Measure* Lakey discusses Quaker leadership in the 21st century in movements for social change and economic justice. He urges Friends to look at their own class backgrounds and assumptions, and challenges Friends to build the community necessary to play leading roles in the coming struggles.

He frames his message in the form of queries, or “puzzles” as he calls them. He asks why Quakers were historically reluctant to form alliances with people of color; why Friends are not more active in environmental issues, and why Friends are reticent to take on leadership.

Lakey states that “Friends need to break out of the limiting and distorting influence of the class structure. ... one more challenge to the testimony of equality.” Lakey breaks class structure into “the working class,” “the middle class,” and “the owning class.” I would argue that there are only two classes, the owning class, and then everyone else who works for a living, but that’s a conversation for another time.

Lakey describes characteristics of working class and middle class people. He defines working class as the

people who do the actual work: laborers and service providers; people who are passionate about issues, and speak from the heart. In his discussions about the “middle class,” he says that the function of middle class jobs is primarily one of *management* and *supervision*; it is a function of the middle class to stay loyal to the owning class. “The management lens is about process, smoothing things down, keeping things under control.” He assumes that most Quakers are of the middle class, and, as a result of social conditioning, conflict avoidance pervades the Religious Society of Friends today.

We, today, as middle class people, are conflict-averse and take refuge in process. Lakey says that it is not a matter of individual short sightedness, but rather that we have learned from Friends’ historical struggles with sexism, racism and homophobia. “...the larger culture sends us messages so powerfully that our Quakerism and our families have been shaped by them.”

He quotes Lucretia Mott: “Any great change must expect opposition because it shakes the very foundation of privilege.” Expanding that, “Mott would know that climate change cannot be halted without an out-and-out fight with big oil, big coal, the banks and the other owning class institutions that are engaged every day, in planetary destruction.”

“When we exclude working class people and try to manage each other, we don’t get community. Adding more doses of process can’t get us there.”

Lakey concludes with a message of hope, quoting Marianne Williamsom: “Our deepest fear is *not* that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. ... We are born to manifest the glory of God that is within us. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we’re liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others.”

Bible Study

Our December Bible study with Geoff Knowlton was cancelled by a winter storm. This was unfortunate, because the topic was to be the Christmas story, and it was going to be family friendly. Friends enjoy Geoff’s knowledge of the scriptures, history and his sense of humor. Watch for the next Bible study and other third Sunday discussions in the Weekly Reminders that Clarence sends out by email.

These days our third floor First Day School room is frequently well filled with our children. We missed the Barnard family as they were in Spain from September until Christmas. Maye, our childcare provider, has been a cheerful addition this year, and on some First Days we are fortunate to have so many pre-school aged children that Members and Attenders volunteer to join in the play in the second floor nursery.

Our First Day Lessons are based on Quaker principles, discussing Quaker Testimonies and what it means to be a Friend. We study some Quaker history, share Biblical stories and other spiritual stories, and we revel in the marvels of the natural world. We sing, talk, draw, ponder, and think.

The Junior Young Friends took the initiative and planned a family movie held on Saturday, October 19. The children wanted to see the movie, *E.T. the Extraterrestrial*. While waiting for "showtime", people thought of things that a visitor from another planet should know about, and they drew pictures which were taped together to form a "quilt." Everyone participated in this activity while munching on pizza. The "quilt" contained a large variety of objects, from a hearing aid to a pony. We enjoyed popcorn while we watched the movie in the filled-to-capacity main room.

The film gave us an opportunity to talk about how we think about and treat others who may be different from us. We were pleased with the popularity of this event, as it was well attended by Worcester Friends of all ages and by some of our community neighbors.



In January, using our Quaker practice of consensus, we drafted a letter to Greg Mortenson and the staff of the Central Asia Institute. During 2012 and 2013, the First Day School collected money using the CAI's Pennies for Peace curriculum. This was the second time the children chose to support the project of building schools and educating girls in Pakistan. Our problem was that the check that was sent to CAI in March, 2013 was never negotiated, even though a Certificate of Appreciation was received in April 2013! After receiving a publication from CAI soon after we had decided to support a food bank with the Pennies for Peace money, the children decided to give CAI another chance. They are sending half of their collected money to CAI with a request that they receive a letter of assurance that the money will be used properly. Once they have a response and know that this check has been cashed, the balance will be sent. The First Day School wishes to acknowledge the generous contributions of Friends and Attenders, and will inform our Meeting's OAFs and YAFs of the outcome. (Quaker jargon: OAF – Older Adult Friends; YAFs are Younger Adult Friends.)

Our Junior Young Friends enjoy the Junior Yearly

Meeting Retreats. In September, there were 43 Young Friends at the Woolman Hill Retreat. Four of our children attended the November retreat on at the Westport Friends Meeting, and will be in Wellesley in January for the Sculpy Retreat. Adult members who are interested in staffing for JYM retreats should contact Gretchen Baker-Smith through the NEYM web-site.

Friends Committee on National Legislation: A Quaker Lobby in the Public Interest

On November 14, more than 200 Quakers and other FCNL supporters headed to Capitol Hill to ask Congress to pass a budget that meets the needs of families, individuals and communities across our nation. We can contribute to their work by writing to our senators today and asking them to invest in communities and provide a path out of poverty instead of putting more of our tax dollars into the Pentagon.

This lobby day came at a critical time. The effects of

out-of-control military spending are now obvious to most Americans. In early November, the New York Times editorial board weighed in, saying: "America can no longer afford unrestrained military spending." They join a diverse group and individuals including the Stimson Center, CATO Institute and Sen. Tom Coburn (OK) who have spoken out in favor of Pentagon budget cuts over the last several years.

Meditation at the United Nations Building in New York

Here is a brief excerpt from Virginia Swain's eloquent post on her October blog. In it, Virginia describes some of her initial connections with her work with the United Nations. Friends are encouraged to read the full post at:

<http://virginiaswain.com/?p=580>



I stopped by the meditation room just off the visitors' entrance.

Outside the door is a magnificent Chagall window with a simple plaque that begins with the words of Dag Hammarskjold, the second Secretary-General.

"We all have within us a center of stillness surrounded by silence. There is an ancient saying that the sense of a vessel is not in its shell but in the void. So it is with this room. It is for

those who come here to fill the void with what they find in the center of stillness."

Inside, there is a Swedish stone with a shaft of light on it. Hammarskjold's intention was that there are simple things which speak to us all with the same language. We have sought for such things and we believe we have found them in the shaft of light striking the shimmering surface of solid rock. In the middle of the room, we see a symbol of how, daily, the light of the sky gives life to the earth on which we stand, a symbol to many of us of how the light of the spirit gives life to matter. The shaft of light strikes the stone in a room of utter simplicity. There are no other symbols, there is nothing to distract our attention or to break in on the stillness within ourselves. ... The meditation room became my spiritual home at the United Nations.

Virginia is a visionary woman who has traveled widely and believes that she is guided by an Inner Voice of Love. Her book, *A Mantle of Roses: A Woman's Journey Home to Peace* (2004), is a fascinating read. Virginia has founded many organizations and led numerous workshops and ritual celebrations. In short, Virginia does not seem to pause in her efforts to bring peace to the world. Learn more about Virginia's work at:

www.centerglobalcommunitylaw.org

EARLY in September, I traveled to Philadelphia with several other New England Quakers to lead an Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) Basic Training at Tacony High School in Philadelphia. Tacony is one of the two American Paradigm Charter Schools in Philadelphia that made a commitment to bring AVP to all of their staff and student body this year. Both schools are located in a distressed area with high crime rates. 85% of the population lives below the official poverty level.

There were 27 AVP teams and 63 AVP facilitators in two high schools. Nancy Shippen (Acton Friends Meeting), Sheila Garrett and Margaret Hawthorn (both of Monadnock Friends Meeting) and Kathy Rubenstein, AVP-MA co-ordinator, were other facilitators from New England. Most of the teachers had participated in AVP programs during the summer. Nancy Shippen and I co-facilitated a 10th grade classroom (23 students) with Sarah Vieldhouse, their homeroom teacher.

September 8th was the first day of school for the Tacony students. They participated in 3 days of AVP workshops which were designed to explore the roots of violence and build peace teams. School administrators and local politicians attended the closing ceremonies and emphasized that the school had brought this program to them because they were "the seeds of change."

We spent three days on the third floor classroom during a heat wave. A few places in the school were cooler; our classroom was not. We concentrated on exercises promoting empathy and structured workshops around student needs. Each evening I met with a group of 5-10 facilitators to discuss the use of AVP in a school setting. The group I met with was led by Nadine Hoover of Friends' Peace Team in Asia West-Pacific. We reminded ourselves that AVP is a process, not a recipe.

I was painfully aware of cultural differences between my childhood and these young people's experiences. It was sad to see how little vision they had. They were unable to express hopes, wishes, or desires other than for money, a big house, a Mercedes Benz. Guns, drugs, abandonment are expected – seen as "normal."

One of the more mind-bending exchanges in our class was a verbal exchange I had with Joe, a small statured Spanish speaking boy who minimally participated in exercises. He cuddled with one of the girls and was hyper-verbal during unstructured time. During our last half hour together, Joe denied any experience of

physical violence. Other students who had spoken of violence in their lives doubted him. Joe became hostile and justified himself. "My uncle was gonna beat me, but I never touched him. I didn't lay a hand on him at all. I had a knife." It was clear that Joe believed that because he had a knife for protection, the incident did not involve violence. The students were in apparent agreement: you gotta protect yourself; the presence of a knife or gun is protection. - We have a lot of work to do!!!

After we left, 43 Tacony School students chose to continue to learn more about Alternatives to Violence through an after-school program.

The National AVP Gathering will take place in Philadelphia this coming May. It is hoped that the students will lead some of the workshops at the AVP National Gathering. Stay tuned! I hope to be there, and will let you know what I learn. In the meanwhile, I am facilitating AVP programs in the North Central Correctional Institution in Gardner. If you are interested in learning more about AVP, I'd enjoy talking with you.

Jay's Fireplace

flames lick charred logs

wrap round them and dance

sparks jump up and fly

below, the city of red coals

ripples and glistens

living homes filled

with laughter and love

beyond, are the ashes

lumpy and grey

fluffy and still

waiting now

to nourish radishes and roses

ktg, 5 January 2013

News about Friends

The Barnards returned home from Barcelona in December. Daron was on sabbatical and did research on a project while there. Katherine reports that adjusting to the change of schedule and learning the ropes Lucy and Malcolm found friends at their new school, and Lucy has Skyped with her Spanish friend. While they were in Barcelona, they attended Meeting for Worship with a small but lovely group of multi-national Quakers who worship together once a month.

Matt Shorten became a grandfather on December 18th, when daughter Karina and her husband Alan Boyer gave birth to a beautiful baby girl, Nova. Born at home in Rockland, Maine, she weighed in at 7 lbs. 11 oz.

Four days later, however, Nova had a medical emergency and had to be rushed to the Maine Medical Hospital in Portland when she became unresponsive and flaccid. The doctors at the neo-natal unit there administered a host of medical interventions to little Nova, while family members stayed on nearby to keep watch. It was determined an infection was the probable cause of the difficulty. A few days later, Nova showed her resilience by recovering fully, and everybody went home in time to share their first Christmas together!

Matt and family thank everyone for their prayers.

Irving Stone, father of Phil Stone, passed away at home on December 16th. He was with beloved friends and family.

Shelter In Any Storm

Friends at Meetinghouse despite snow and slush
All sat silently enjoying together the hush
Quakers old and young seeking in the Light
Youth off to First day school sprang with delight
Hearts yearning for peace and healthy future for all
Sitting in inner warmth listening for God's call
Facing mysterious sacred center
Waiting at open door for Spirit to enter
Long silence that is far from the world's norm
Hearing of home and this shelter from the storm
Suddenly a deep heart warm feeling growing
A single breath shifted all my knowing
Silence shouting our wordless eternal name
We shall not be the same
Opening and letting go of fears and own-way ideas
When loving in the Light and opening
We need no longer be moping
No matter how dark the night
Souls inside dance in the Light
It is within us - and waking
Perhaps even again Quaking
Light beckoning humans to the core
To let love flow to all shore to shore
Praying peace, justice and sustainability to be the norm
Even in blizzard's blast this Light is shelter in any storm

*From Meeting for Worship experience
Worcester Friends Meeting*

David Connelly Legg, February 24, 2013

A newcomer at a Quaker Meeting whispered to a Friend sitting nearby: "When does the service begin?" The Friend responded, "When meeting for worship is over."

Worcester Friends Meeting Withdraws FUM Financial Support

In September 2013, the Worcester Friends Meeting held a threshing session to discuss the employment policies of Friends United Meeting (FUM). These policies specifically exclude, among others, members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community from positions of leadership. The result of many years of introspection, this conversation was enriched by the leadership of Frederick Martin, from the FUM committee for New England Yearly Meeting.

We believe that FUM's employment policies regarding members of the LGBT community is at variance with the Christian faith. The history of the Bible is one of ever-increasing inclusiveness; although the people of God were at one time defined narrowly as Abraham and his offspring, this grew to eventually include all of the Hebrew people. Even greater inclusiveness was called for in the writings of Isaiah and others. The apostle Paul wrote that "Christ has broken down the dividing wall" and that "there is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus". Furthermore, Worcester Friends Meeting is persuaded that a growing body of scholarship disproves the idea that the Bible labels homosexuality a sin.

We find FUM's exclusionary employment policies to be contrary to the Christian faith in general, and the fundamental precepts of Quakerism in particular. The existence of "that of God" in all people calls on us to respect and love them, regardless of differences, as our equals. We agree with our brethren at Britain's Yearly Meeting, who declared that "...the quality and depth of feeling between two people is the most important part of a loving relationship, not their gender or sexual orientation."

We note that FUM's discriminatory policies which we find abhorrent were adopted decades ago, when many were ignorant and fearful of the LGBT community and the issues they faced. This history does not excuse the continuation of such appalling discrimination, and our path forward is clear. For as long as FUM continues is prejudiced policies, Worcester Friends Meeting will withhold from its contribution to New England Yearly Meeting an amount equal to the portion earmarked for FUM. This amounts to some \$70, annually, and we further intend to donate those funds to an external organization that works to promote the rights of the LGBT community.

Sunflower Dreams

In winter's depth
on icy-edged days
down around zero
I dream
of planting summer's garden
wholly, entirely
with SUNFLOWERS
Tall, bold discs greeting the sun
in all their diversity
fringed, single, double, wild
edible
ornamental
deep gold to bronze
high as corn, sunny as rainbow light
warm as summer's heat

By Sandra Kocher



The M-word: Money, and the Meeting

Automatic withdrawal makes your financial contribution to the Worcester Friends Meeting easy! Friends are encouraged to consider completing the Vanco form (below) and mailing it to the Worcester Friends Meeting Treasurer at 901 Pleasant Street, Worcester MA 01602. Making a monthly contribution to the Meeting using automatic withdrawal is simple, and it makes a significant difference to the Meeting's cash flow. If you are already participating in the automatic monthly giving plan, think about raising your contribution by as much or as little as you can.

Many churches are experiencing a decline in attendance. Our Quaker Meeting has been fortunate, in that we are experiencing an increase at our First Day Meetings for Worship. We are fortunate to have a beautiful meetinghouse, however, our expenses for upkeep and maintenance are greater than members' and attenders' contributions. Do not hesitate to contact our Clerk or our Treasurer if you have any questions or concerns. Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business is held on Second Sundays at 9 AM. Members are expected to attend, and Attenders are encouraged.

A sign-up form is available from our website:

<http://worcesterfriendsmeeting.org/EZGivingForm.pdf>

Meeting-for-Eating Recipe

Worcester Friends Meeting is the Meeting-for-Eating, and once in a while there's an offering at our weekly potluck that Friends enjoy so much, they ask for the recipe.

In January, **Jessica Seem's Kale Potato Soup** was a real hit. Now you can make it at home!

Kale Potato Soup (from Simply in Season)

1 large bunch kale, chopped (about 1/2 pound)

Steam and set aside. (If you cook it with the potatoes, the flavor can be too strong.)

1 Tbsp. oil or butter

1 large onion, chopped

1 clove garlic, minced

Heat oil in soup pot. Add onion and saute until golden. Add garlic and saute another minute.

2 large potatoes, diced

2 cups hot water or broth

Add, bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer until potatoes are soft. Remove half of the cooked potatoes; puree the rest with the cooking liquid and return to the soup pot. Return reserved potatoes and steamed kale to soup pot. (Or just puree everything if you want.)

3 cups water or broth

1/2 tsp. salt or to taste

pepper to taste

Add along with additional hot water or milk to preferred consistency. Heat gently until hot and serve.

* I've made this vegan for meeting and it's very nice. I've also tried it without steaming the kale first, but we haven't liked the flavor as much.

Worcester Friends Meeting Meeting for Business

October 13, 2013

Present: Paul Gallagher, Mary Chenaille, Mary Bennett, Geoff Knowlton, Aaron Sakulich, Mark Sullivan, Betty Jones, Clarence Burley, Matthew Shorten, Whitney Mikkelsen, Fred Mikkelsen, Barbara Sullivan, Katy Green, Karen Sargent, clerk.

- 10-13-2013-01 Meeting began with a period of silence and a reading, The Earthquake, from the Koran.
- 10-13-2013-02 Peace & Social Concerns/Outreach committee reported that Market Day made \$942. Many Friends helped make pies, set up and work that day.
- 10-13-2013-03 The committee would like to submit a grant in conjunction with the Regional Environmental Council for funds to support a spoken word series around environmental issues. Friends approve.
- 10-13-2013-04 The treasurer reported that income is about \$600 less than expected. About \$650 was received from the special appeal letter to repair the meeting house roof. Committee expenses have been higher than expected due to trustee's expenses and billing received for some services. NEYM donations have been paid for the year. The balance sheet will be presented at next month's business meeting.
- 10-13-2013-05 After the threshing session on concerns regarding FUM and NEYM, the Practical committee proposes that the meeting decrease it's donations to New England Yearly Meeting by the same percentage as the percentage of NEYM's budget that NEYM sends to Friends United Meeting with a letter explaining the action. Should individuals wish to, they could send money to NEYM indicating it is to be forwarded to FUM.
- 10-13-2013-06 The First Day School children planned a very successful movie night showing ET as a family night. They propose to have another family night for pumpkin carving; Friends approve.
- 10-13-2013-07 The Spiritual committee discussed concerns from Providence MM regarding child abuse perpetrated by a member. The committee discerned any abuse be reported to Mass Department of Children & Families. The meeting asks the committee to continue to work with this matter for specific recommendations on process.
- 10-13-2013-08 Geoff Knowlton will present a bible study third Sunday, December 15.
- 10-13-2013-09 Issues of punctuality and cell phone use at both business and meetings for worship were discussed.
- 10-13-2013-10 The Spiritual committee asks that that its name be changed to the Spiritual Life Committee to better reflect its concerns. Friends approve.
- 10-13-2013-11 The committee discussed the issue of concern regarding the policy of Friends United Meeting regarding their position on sexual relations outside of the marriage of a man and woman, including appointment of staff members. Many Friends took part in a third Sunday discussion on this subject. After a long, centered discussion, Friends approve sending a letter to NEYM that Worcester Friends Meeting finds the policy of FUM against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transsexual persons and unmarried heterosexual couples offensive. As NEYM's policy continues to support FUM financially, our meeting is withholding from its donations to NEYM a percentage equal to the NEYM portion of the budget given to FUM yearly. Aaron and Geoff and others who are interested will draft a letter to bring to business meeting.
- 10-13-2013-12 Opportunity having been given for questions and concerns, meeting ended with a moment of silence purposing to meet again eleventh month, tenth or at the call of the clerk.

Submitted in the Light ,
Barbara Sullivan, recording clerk

Worcester Friends Meeting Meeting for Business

November 10, 2013

Present: Mark Sullivan, Mary Chenaille, Aaron Sakulich, Phil Stone, Mary Bennett, Mathew Shorten, Clarence Burley, Betty Jones, Barbara Sullivan, Katy Green, Virginia Powell-Brasier, Fred Mikkelsen, Kevin Walsh, Jessica Seem, Karen Sargeant, clerk.

- 11-10-2013-01 Meeting began with a period of silence and a reading from ACTS 10: 34-35.
- 11-10-2013-02 The Spiritual Life committee reports consideration of how to address the occasional presence of younger friends with challenging behavior; they will be working with First Day School to provide appropriate training for childcare providers. Friends ask that the committee develop a list of Friends who will assist with childcare when needed.
- 11-10-2013-03 There will be a third Sunday discussion in the future on how to read the Bible.
- 11-10-2013-04 The search continues for someone to take over as editor of the meeting newsletter.
- 11-10-2013-05 A draft of a letter to NEYM was presented regarding the meeting's minute of the decision to withhold that part of our donations to NEYM that equals the amount earmarked for Friends United Meeting, and sending the withheld amount to an organization that supports LGBT rights. After discussion that resulted in some editing, Friends approved the letter as attached.
- 11-10-2013-06 The Practical committee reports that they have started the process to petition the Worcester City Council to paint a crosswalk on Pleasant Street at the intersection of Kenilworth Road.
- 11-10-2013-07 The committee is reviewing member /attender lists with the intent to reduce the number of mailed newsletters.
- 11-10-2013-08 They would like to plan a work day to clean out the basement on Saturday, December 7, 2013 at 9:30 AM.
- 11-10-2013-09 The treasurer asked for input regarding foreseeable expenses for preparing the 2014 budget, preferably by December 1.

- 11-10-2013-10 The treasurer's report notes less income from donations, and higher expenses for maintenance resulting in a deficit of about \$3,000.
- 11-10-2013-11 The balance sheet was presented and explained. There was a discussion about the different funds and their histories to answer questions from Friends. The treasurer asks that the timing of the presentation of the balance sheet be changed to be able to incorporate the quarterly updates of the NEYM pooled funds. Friends approve this change.
- 11-10-2013-12 Opportunity having been given for questions and concerns, meeting ended with a period of silence, purposing to meet again twelfth month, eighth, or at the call of the clerk.
- Submitted in the Light,
Barbara Sullivan, recording clerk

Worcester Friends Meeting Meeting for Business

December 8, 2013

Present: Geoff Knowlton, Mark Sullivan, Betty Jones, Jessica Seem, Matthew Shorten, Mary Chenaille, Barbara Sullivan, Katy Green, Fred Mikkelsen, Whitney Mikkelsen, Clarence Burley, Karen Sargent, clerk.

- 12-08-2013-01. Meeting began with a period of silence and reflection on the life of Nelson Mandela and his lessons on forgiveness and healing.
- 12-08-2013-02. The Spiritual Life Committee reports the Gifts & Leadings group asks for Friends to look for leadings as to ways they can serve the meeting and contact Katy Green, Matthew Shorten, Katharine Bernard, or Fred Mikkelsen.
- 12-08-2013-03. There is continuing outreach to some meeting families.
- 12-08-2013-04. Several members attended the retirement banquet for Rev. Richard Wright of the Emmanuel Baptist Church.
- 12-08-2013-05. First Day School has had regular attendance with about eight children; the childcare worker has been assisting with First Day School when there haven't been infants/toddlers.
- 12-08-2013-06. Peace & Social Concerns/Outreach notes Martha Yager reported on the activities of SE NE AFSC.
- 12-08-2013-07. A report was given on additions to the National Defense Act allowing preventive detention and suspension of habeas corpus and legal challenges to them.
- 12-08-2013-08. Immigration matters are a major area of concern for the committee. A letter writing campaign will be organized.
- 12-08-2013-09. The treasurer reported that revenue is now close to that budgeted, which is very positive; income from members & attenders has increased. Expenses however increased for reasons beyond our control-house maintenance primarily.
- 12-08-2013-10. The budget process is underway; all requests for funds for next year's budget must be given to the treasurer by December 30, 2013.
- 12-08-2013-11. The Practical Committee notes a new thermostat will be installed.
- 12-08-2013-12. There was a work day December 7 to clean the basement. Thanks to Friends who helped.
- 12-08-2013-13. WPI students will be working with NSTAR for an energy audit for the meeting house.
- 12-08-2013-14. Estimates to replace the cement wall between the sidewalk and lawn were between \$10,000-50,000. The committee doesn't feel the problem is that severe and recommends not pursuing this at this time.
- 12-08-2013-15. The beech tree has been transplanted to the back yard.
- 12-08-2013-16. The historical commission in Leicester sent a donation of a section of a book written in 1890 on the cemeteries in town that includes all of the names of those buried in the Quaker Cemetery up to that point.
- 12-08-2013-17. The old office was cleaned out along with the basement yesterday.
- 12-08-2013-18. Friends ask that there be a Christmas cookie swap on December 22 after rise of meeting. Friends approve.
- 12-08-2013-19. There will be a Christmas Bible study next first day at 9:30 AM.
- 12-08-2013-20. The annual meeting for business will be January 13, 2014.
- 12-08-2013-21. Opportunity having been given for questions and concerns, meeting ended purposing to meet again first month, thirteenth or at the call of the clerk.

Submitted in the Light,
Barbara Sullivan, recording clerk

Worcester Friends Meeting Meeting for Business

January 12, 2014

Present: Daran Barnard, Katharine Barnard, Betty Jones, Clarence Burley, Katie Green, Phil Stone, Derek Byrne, Whitney Mikkelson, Jessica Seem, Kevin Walsh, Matthew Shorten, Mark Sullivan, Mary Chenaille, Fred Mikkelson, Barbara Sullivan, Karen Sargent, clerk.

- 01-12-2014-01 Meeting began with a period of silence and a reading from Reading and Writing My Way, by Barbara Harroun, Friends Journal, Nov. 2013, p. 7.
- 01-12-2014-02 Spiritual Life Committee didn't meet in December. Gifts and Leadings were active with the slate of nominees to present at the annual meeting.
- 01-12-2014-03 Practical Committee was busy with the plumber and furnace after a pipe burst in the basement. The heat now works. Recommendations were made that are being considered by the committee. Some books to be sold at the fair stored in the room where the pipe burst did get wet and will have to be recycled.
- 01-12-2014-04 An estimate of \$655 from Stanley Steemer to clean the chair upholstery, carpets, and upstairs window seat was approved by Friends.
- 01-12-2014-05 The committee proposes asking a minimum donation of \$30 for the use of the meeting house by non-profit organizations. There was a discussion, and Friends ask the committee to take issues such as frequency of use by a group into consideration.
- 01-12-2014-06 The committee recommends sending out quarterly appeals to members and attenders for financial support. There was a discussion and Friends ask the committee to take this matter back for further seasoning.
- 01-12-2014-07 A new thermostat has been installed.
- 01-12-2014-08 The committee recommends requesting a Wednesday, Jan. 29 at 5:30.
- 01-12-2014-09 Monthly meeting for business adjourned temporarily, moving to the annual meeting.
- 01-12-2014-10 Meeting reconvened after the annual meeting with Daran Barnard as clerk.
- 01-12-2014-11 A concern was raised about providing adequate coverage for the nursery when there are more than 2 infants/toddlers present. Friends are asked to contact Katharine Barnard if they are interested in being on the list to help.
- 01-12-2014-12 The treasurer asks that in order to understand the full financial picture of the meeting, that Friends who donate in kind services to the meeting put a note in the box re the amount spent.
- 01-12-2014-13 A question was brought up regarding the placement of name tags in the hallway. Friends ask the Practical Committee to decide and implement this matter.
- 01-12-2014-14 The current revisions of NEYM Faith and Practice including the new appendices are available in the library.
- 01-12-2014-15 Opportunity having been given for questions and concerns, meeting adjourned with a reading from NEYM Faith and Practice Queries on spiritual life and a period of silence, purposing to meet again second month, ninth or at the call of the clerk.

Submitted in the Light,
Barbara Sullivan, recording clerk

Worcester Friends Meeting Annual Meeting for Business

January 12, 2014

Present: Katharine Barnard, Daran Barnard, Betty Jones, Katie Green, Mary Chenaille, Phil Stone, Fred Mikkelson, Whitney Mikkelson, Jessica Seem, Kevin Walsh, Matthew Shorten, Clarence Burley, Barbara Sullivan, Derek Byrne, Karen Sargent, clerk.

- 01-12-2014-01 Meeting began after the adjournment of the monthly meeting for business.
- 01-12-2014-02 Gifts and Leadings presented its nominations for meeting clerks and committees. Friends approve with appreciation for those who served in the previous year.
- 01-12-2014-03 The treasurer presented the budget. After discussion, with addition of funds for first day school and Peace and Social concerns/Outreach programs, the budget was approved.
- 01-12-2014-04 There was no other annual report from the Practical Committee.
- 01-12-2014-05 There was no report from Peace & Social Concerns/Outreach committee.
- 01-12-2014-06 Meeting adjourned with a period of silence.

Submitted in the Light,
Barbara Sullivan, recording clerk

Scheduled Meetings

Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business..... Second Sunday, 9 AM
Spiritual Life Committee, convener Matthew Shorten Fourth Sunday 9:30 AM
Practical Committee, convener Aaron Sakulich First Sunday, 9:30 AM
Peace/Social Concerns/Outreach, convener Phil Stone..... as called
Mid-week Meeting for Worship, convener Aaron Sakulich..... Wednesdays, 7 PM
Worship at Briarwood Community, convener Betty Jones Third Friday, 3:30 PM

Clerk of Worcester Friends Monthly Meeting Daron Barnard
Recording Clerk Barbara Sullivan
Treasurer..... Mark Sullivan
Recording Clerk/Corresponding Secretary Clarence Burley
First Day School Katie Green and Katherine Barnard
Newsletter Editor..... Katie Green

Deadline for the next newsletter is flexible. Friends interested in editing, please contact Katie at info@worcesterfriendsmeeting.org