



WFM NEWSLETTER

January 2022

Worcester Friends Meeting (Religious Society of Friends)

WFM acknowledges that our Meetinghouse sits on the traditional territory of the Nipmuc Nation.

901 Pleasant Street, Worcester, MA 01602

508-754-3887

www.WorcesterFriendsMeeting.org

WFM Meetinghouse is closed for in person worship. Zoom worship continues.

We gather in silence and ask that Zoom attendees enter worship muted; please unmute your microphone only when speaking.

Sunday Meeting for Worship 11:00 am.

<https://zoom.us/j/93581663579?pwd=eDFxUjVyL2IISTI2NkxsZWIFUTE0QT09>

Meeting ID: 935 8166 3579

Passcode: 661048

Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business is held on the second Sunday of the month at 9:00 am. Please contact Daron at daronbarnard@yahoo.com with items for Business.

Zoom Link for Business Meeting:

<https://zoom.us/j/92774446613?pwd=M2IyeWJjZVpqTHB4bTJNdWRyRnlhZz09>

Meeting ID: 927 7444 6613

Passcode: 253544

Saturday Worship of Worcester Friends Meeting meets on **Saturday Mornings at 11:00 am.**

<https://zoom.us/j/98621922427?pwd=S1hKZ1hZQmp0MW5hRW9XMjN3TzdHQT09>

Meeting ID: 986 2192 2427

Passcode: 983394

Friendly Bible Study continues on **Wednesdays 9am-10am.**

<https://zoom.us/j/99835123902?pwd=dGVPRnFCWit4RIUzMUN4c09xc0FLQT09>

Meeting ID: 998 3512 3902

Passcode: 436310

Please contact mjchenaille@yahoo.com for more information.

Annual Meeting of Worcester Friends Meeting

January 9, 2022

Present: Daron Barnard, Katharine Barnard, Tom Brenner, Sheila Brenner, Clarence Burley, Lucy Candib, Mary Chenaille, Jim Gleaton, Mike Shell, Marcel LaFlamme, Ellen Perry, Aaron Sakulich, Matt Shorten, Karen Sargent, Richard Schmitt

Clerking: Daron Barnard

From the January Business Meeting, we transitioned to Annual Meeting.

Gifts and Leadings:

Matthew Shorten reported from Gifts and Leadings, a subcommittee of Spiritual Life. The committee has not yet finalized the proposal for committee members, but has nominations for officers. The following nominations are put forward: Daron Barnard for Clerk, Aaron Sakulich for Treasurer, and Katharine Barnard for Recording Clerk, and these nominations are accepted by affirmation. Until the new committee nominations are put forward, committees are asked to continue with their 2021 composition.

Treasurer's report:

Aaron Sakulich presented a summary of 2021 finances. Main exceptions to anticipated were the significant expense for the insulation and the lesser expense in support of Woolman Hill. Aaron reports that there is still money that is ear-marked for Open Hearts Open Hands and PASCO; the money that was held up in the frozen PayPal account has now been released.

There was discussion about our income and the state of our bank balance. Over the past year, we have withdrawn the interest from our NEYM Pooled Funds to support our Meeting's budget. This decision was made for calendar year 2021 due to concerns about a decreasing bank balance that would not support our planned expenses. Entering 2022, we are in a more stable financial position than one year ago, with a reasonable bank balance to support our budget. Approximately 20% of our income comes from rent. We anticipate Center for Nonviolent Solutions and NEYM will continue being rent-paying tenants. We also have sometimes rental income from other groups. Another 20% comes from our ACH contributions. Further decision about whether to continue withdrawal of our Pooled Fund interest is deferred to Business Meeting.

Practical Committee:

Karen Sargent reported a summary from Practical Committee. The Committee's focus was on care of the building, both in terms of regular upkeep, repairs, and improvement in environmental sustainability. The committee supported a fall Market Day that was followed by filling a dumpster with items to be discarded; this was so successful that it is suggested to be done annually. 2022 plans include further building upkeep and repairs, as well as two Market Days. Full report from the committee is appended below.

Peace, Social Concerns and Outreach:

Lucy Candib reported from the committee. The main focus of the work of the committee has been in establishing relationship with Nipmuc people and The committee continues anti-racism and anti-oppression work, both local, regional, and international, which also includes self-education. The committee is reinvigorating outreach activities, welcome to new attenders, and maintaining connection to Worcester Interfaith. Full report from the committee is appended below.

Spiritual Life:

Tom Brenner reports from **Spiritual Life Committee**, expressing joy at the growth of meeting membership and attendance. The committee continues to hold and care for members and attenders with needs and concerns. The committee's work this year has focused on care and maintenance of our spiritual community as we connect virtually or through hybrid meetings. In this new year we hope to live into our current reality, with vision rather than reactivity, and find ways to continue to connect and build community with one another.

The annual meeting was closed with silence, and we returned to monthly Business Meeting.

Respectfully,
Katharine Barnard, Recording Clerk

Worcester Friends Meeting Practical Committee 2021 Annual Report

The Practical Committee has worked on maintaining the Meetinghouse during the year when we started to be able to hold hybrid in person and online meetings. The Meetinghouse walls were insulated with dense packed cellulose in February at a cost of \$8165. This was done to save energy and money and to help the building hold heat better during power outages which also may help prevent freezing pipes. In March a leaking radiator was discovered to have let water seep into the floor and the ceiling of the second floor. The radiator was removed and plans were made to replace this radiator and the ones on the second floor above the meeting room. In April it was found that the pump motor on the furnace was leaking badly, this was replaced and has been working well. The open spaces in the wall between the front yard the sidewalk have been a source of worry for years with the hazard of folks falling. The spaces have been replaced with steps put in by Mike Mallory and are much safer and more convenient now. In April it was found that the pump motor on the furnace was leaking badly, this was replaced and has been working well. We were able to hold a successful Market Day in the fall, with a new twist, in that we hired a dumpster to get ride of items we did not want to keep from Market Day and to clear out the ruined carpets in the NEYM rooms. We also allowed members of the meeting to use the dumpster and asked that they contribute to the fee. This was very sucessful and the Treasurer recommends adding the dumpster to future Market Day plans. We held a very good Putter Day and removed the damaged carpets from the Yearly Meeting rooms, cleaned the kitchen and some of the basement, and pruned trees and bused and weeded. The cemetery had several trees removed, but still needs more removal of brush. We have decided to remove the gates at the cemetery and some progress has been made in dismantling the pins that hold the gates up, but we have been delayed by icy weather in removing them. The old computer finally failed to work and it has been disposed of. After due consideration, we have decided on the new laptop computer to buy and plan to purchase it soon. We also plan to buy a microphone to use during meeting. We still need to find a person to keep track of the meeting's email server. An air cleaner has been ordered but disappeared en route and has been re-shipped.

Plans for the coming year include having both a Spring and Fall Market Day, repainting the floors in the rooms in the NEYM office rooms, probably replacing the roof of the porch, peeling paint on the rear of the building and a problem with a soffit at the edge of the roof. It looks like we will be able to keep both of our main tenants, NEYM and the Center for Non-Violent Solutions.

Peace and Social Concerns and Outreach Committee Report for 2021

Our most solid project of the past year has been the work toward a formal land acknowledgment about the rightful dominion of the Nipmuc people over the land of 901 Pleasant Street and its surroundings.

We have crafted and the Business Meeting has approved a statement for a plaque planned to be placed on a large rock in front of the meeting house. The statement acknowledges the Nipmuc stewardship of the land for thousands of years and the debt of gratitude we owe them. This project is not near completion but is slowly moving forward. In the coming year we may well see in front of our meeting house material evidence of our Quaker commitment to this matter.

After trying different avenues towards establishing relationships with the local Nipmuc community, we were able to welcome Fred Freeman of the Nipmuc group to attend our committee meeting, offer some insight into the makeup of the local Nipmuc presence, and discuss the above land acknowledgement project. He offered an insightful single word correction. We continue to hope for and work toward meeting with a larger group of Nipmuc people, but that plan is slow in coming to fruition.

In the past year we made a number of efforts to establish closer relationships with some members of the Worcester African American community. We supported the lawsuit that Interfaith brought against the city for electing all the school board members at large. That law suit was successful, and the method for electing school board members is in the process of being changed. We helped to draw attention to the unfair treatment of African American children in the Worcester public schools. Some of our members offered support to the Black Excellence Academy and to the people of color nominated for Worcester City Council and School Committee. Several of those candidates were elected. We need to redouble our efforts to oppose racism in Worcester, in the school system, in the police and everywhere else. We think ongoing involvement in Worcester Interfaith is the clearest strategy to accomplish this at present.

For self-education about racism and its history, members, attenders, and friends of Friends have been meeting almost monthly for over 4 years. We have read books that range across history, analysis, fiction, and personal narratives. The last 3 books we have read are Black Dignity in a World Made for Whiteness by Austin Channing Brown; Harlem Shuffle by Colson Whitehead; and An Indigenous People's History of the US by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz.

We continue to support LGBTQ+ friends in Uganda both by being in touch with the LGBTQ+ Quaker Meeting there and supporting FUST to help gay friends and others to escape persecution in Uganda, where active arrest and torture of LGBTQ+ are ongoing. Until the COVID-19 pandemic, we continued to cook occasional dinners for the LGBTQ+ Task Force of the Hadwen Park Church and to support their annual gala.

We have talked about reacting to global warming, without a concrete strategy for the committee. However, two of our members, Diane Jones and Mike Mallory, mount a weekly demonstration in downtown Shrewsbury and other members of our committee hope to attend those demonstrations in the future.

In the meantime, we are heartened that several new enthusiastic meeting members and attenders have joined our committee and hope that the above projects will move forward with their new energy. This energy is already in evidence as work has begun to address the neglected O of PASCO, Outreach, with evaluation of needs and renovation of our meeting's website and revision of written materials to offer new attenders.

**Worcester Friends Meeting
Meeting for Business
January 9, 2022**

Present: Daron Barnard, Katharine Barnard, Tom Brenner, Sheila Brenner, Clarence Burley, Lucy Candib, Mary Chenaille, Jim Gleaton, Mike Shell, Marcel LaFlamme, Ellen Perry, Aaron Sakulich, Matt Shorten, Karen Sargent, Richard Schmitt

Clerking: Daron Barnard

The meeting opened with silence and a reading of Amanda Gorman's poem "New Day's Lyric". We then adjourned the Business Meeting to take up Annual Meeting, then reconvened Business Meeting thereafter.

Business Items:

1. Membership transfers. We joyfully received request for transfer of membership for Mike Shell and Jim Gleaton. Mike's transfer comes from Gainesville (FL) Meeting and Jim's from Columbia (SC) Meeting. We know Mike and Jim as they have been attending Worcester Meeting for about two years now, both virtually and in person, and are enthusiastic in accepting their membership to Worcester Friends Meeting.
1. Old Sturbridge Village. We received communication from Hartford Monthly Meeting, who invite us to collaborate with them in a project with Old Sturbridge Village (OSV). Hartford Meeting's concern is the under-utilization and portrayal of the Quaker Meetinghouse at OSV, and the lack of education or connection to current-day Quakers. Members of Hartford Meeting plan to meet with representatives of OSV via Zoom in the next month or two, and invite interested Worcester Friends to join. Two of our attenders, Lindsay Mellan and Victoria Haynes, are working at OSV. Clarence Burley was a long-time volunteer at OSV and so has extensive historical knowledge of our connection. Clarence has offered to represent Worcester Friends in the conversation, and Daron will connect with Lindsay and Victoria to see what involvement they might be able to have with this issue. We remember our past collaboration with Betty Jones's nephew Richard Jones (minister from Bolton MA) in holding an annual worship service at the OSV Meetinghouse.
1. Reopening and COVID. We discussed the balance of safety and wanting to connect in person, and how to decide about safe in-person gathering. At the moment, the national and community prevalence of COVID infection is too high to safely gather in person. We can reevaluate near the end of January, monitoring local test-positivity and epidemiological projections. When we do start meeting in person, it is felt that high-quality face masks are very important. As such, the Meeting will maintain a supply of KN95 or N95 masks for those attending in person. We discussed the question of requiring vaccination to attend in person, and decided against this. We agree that revisiting the consideration of in-person meeting on a monthly basis is an adequate frequency, and this discussion will be held among Spiritual Life committee and brought to Business Meeting for wider input. When we do start meeting in person, we would benefit from a greeter (who can

also help with contact tracing sign-in and provision of masks). In the future we can consider potluck or fellowship, potentially outdoors, as a way of deepening our community connection.

Report from Practical Committee:

1. Plumbing. Karen reports that the plumbers have completed part of their work on updating and repairing the heating system. There is now baseboard heat on the third floor and in two rooms on the second floor. The plumbers have also replaced the furnace valve so it is not leaking. They will return soon to complete the installation of baseboard heat in the remainder of the second floor. Once this is completed it will remove the risk of leakage from the second floor radiators. They will take away the old radiators as well. Note that we were not anticipating that the entire second floor would be changed over to baseboard heating, but are glad to have this done. Per the plumbers, this was their original intention, and so their original cost estimate stands.
2. Snow Removal. Mary raised concerns about the timing of snow clearing. She had a texting exchange with Carlitos (the contractor) on the day of the recent snow storm regarding completion of the snow removal. We reviewed Worcester City's snow removal policy requiring that sidewalks be cleared within 10 hours of the end of snowfall. We would like Mary to lay out clear expectations with the contractor. In general, we would expect that within 8 hours of the end of snowfall, they would engage in snow removal, so that we would not be in violation of the City's policy. Additionally, if there is anticipated to be snowfall on a day when access to the meetinghouse is needed (either for worship or for work), Mary can contact the contractor in advance to make arrangements for earlier snow cleanup.

The meeting closed with silence and transition to Meeting for Worship.

Respectfully,
Katharine Barnard, Recording Clerk.

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**Facing Race Book Group** will meet on **Friday, February 4 at 7:30 pm** via zoom. The group will discuss *Heavy: An American Memoir* by Kiese Laymon. The group also plans to read *The Walls Between Us* by Wendy Sanford, a Quaker author who lives in MA and may be available to speak to the community. For more information, contact Lucy at [lmcandib@gmail.com](mailto:lmcandib@gmail.com).

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Worcester Interfaith seeks new Director. For information on the position see <https://www.worcesterinterfaith.com/2022/01/worcester-interfaith-seeks-new-executive-director/>

Friend **Mike Shell** recommends two resources for engagement with Indigenous peoples:

- 1) The October 2021 issue of *Friends Journal*: "[Neighbors or Tenants?](#)" by Francis G. Hutchins. The article offers a corrective to the mythology about William Penn as a "Friend of the Indians," contrasting the historical Penn with George Fox and Benjamin Franklin. Both Fox and Franklin genuinely appreciate the native Americans as equally intelligent human beings who had complex, long-lasting cultures and governments. Both saw these people as neighbors. Penn, on the other hand, as an aristocrat with a royal grant of ownership of 45,000 square miles to the west of West Jersey, considered himself as owner of the land and the Indians a mere "savage, illiterate" tenants.
- 2) [Decolonizing the Quaker Peace Testimony](#), a YouTube video of a recent panel discussion sponsored by the Quaker Theological Discussion group featuring Sa'ed Atshan, tom kunesh, Cristina J. Montiel, Trayce Peterson. Topics include repercussions of slavery and Indigenous land theft on Turtle Island (North America), imperialism in the Philippines, and Quaker approaches to peace in the occupied Palestinian territories. When Friends benefit from others' use of force, what does equitable conflict resolution look like in practice? How can Friends live in solidarity with those being marginalized, and what repairs need to be made for the actions of past Friends?

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**The Intersection of Nipmucs and African-Americans in Worcester with Cheryll Toney Holley Saturday, February 26, 11:00am - 12:00pm**

Via Zoom

Professional Genealogist and Historian Cheryll Toney Holley will discuss the

intersection of Nipmucs and African-Americans in Worcester. Done in conjunction with the Worcester Black History Project.

[Register](#) here.

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QCC 37th Annual Community Breakfast (Virtual) honoring The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Monday, January 17, 2022

The virtual program/livestream link will be available here beginning at 7:45 a.m. on January 17, 2022.

A recording of the event will be posted on the QCC website at the conclusion of the event.







<https://www.qcc.edu/diversity/martin-luther-king-jr-community-events/mlk-jr-annual-community-breakfast>

Guest Speaker is Dr. Kellie Carter Jackson, Educator and Author

Kellie Carter Jackson is an Associate Professor in the Department of Africana Studies at Wellesley College. She is the author of the award-winning *Force & Freedom: Black Abolitionists and the Politics of Violence*. Her book was listed among 13 books to read on African American History by the Washington Post. Carter Jackson is also co-editor of *Reconsidering Roots: Race, Politics, & Memory*. She is the co-host of the podcast "This Day in Esoteric Political History."

Join WSU on **Saturday January 22** for the 28th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Youth Celebration. This year's theme will be: Bridging the Gap: The Healing Power of Unity

To register please click the link below
<https://forms.gle/yFX95jy6XAjr4VzH7>

 WORCESTER STATE UNIVERSITY	SAVE	THE	DATE!
	<p>Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Twenty-Eighth Annual Youth Celebration <i>New Date</i> Saturday, January 22, 2022 Time: 9:00a.m. VIRTUAL/LIVESTREAMED UPDATED 1/4/22</p> 		
<p>Bridging the Gap: The Healing Power of Unity</p>	<p><small>Click the QR code or Hover your smartphone camera over the QR code to R.S.V.P. by January 14, 2022 TO RECEIVE THE ZOOM LINK</small></p> 		
<p>For more information, contact Gertrude Addo at Gaddo@worcester.edu or call 508-929-8049</p>			
<p>Leadership Sponsor </p>	<p>Additional Sponsorship of the 28th MLK Jr. Annual Youth Celebration provided by: Friendly House, YouthConnect Worcester, Office of Multicultural Affairs, Third World Alliance, History Political Science Department, Printing & Publishing.</p>		<p>Presenting Sponsor </p>

As part of QCC's Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Breakfast, United Way of Central Massachusetts, the Worcester Area Mission Society (WAMS), and United Congregational Church are collecting new books for second and third grade students in Worcester Public Schools. With sponsorship from Unum Group, the books will be added to literacy kits and distributed through school principals. Age-appropriate books are needed on Dr. King, other civil rights leaders, or justice and equity topics. A list of suggested books can be found on the WAMS website,

<https://wamsworks.org/dr-martin-luther-king-jr-community-breakfast-book-drive-list-of-books/>. Books can be dropped off at the Worcester Area Mission Society, 6 Institute Rd., Worcester, Monday-Thursday, 9 AM to 12 PM, from now through January 19th, or tax deductible cash donations can be made to WAMS at <https://wamsworks.org/>. WAMS staff will use all money donated to this drive to buy the needed books. Anyone with questions should call Karen Ludington at (508) 755-2329, ext. 4.

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**REMINDER=SPREAD THE WORD: The Next Fight for Social Justice from Worcester  
Interfaith:SPREAD THE WORD about this Issue on November 2022 MA Ballot. SPREAD THE  
WORD:**

For years, the highest-income households in Massachusetts – those in the top 1 percent – have paid a smaller share of their income in state and local taxes than any other income group. They've also benefited from repeated federal tax cuts: 83 percent of the 2017 tax bill's benefits [went to](#) the top 1 percent, and in 2020, the federal CARES Act [included](#) \$135 billion in tax breaks for wealthy business owners. And while countless people and small businesses suffered during the COVID-19 crisis, wealthy executives and investors saw their incomes skyrocket. The 19 billionaires in Massachusetts saw their wealth [increase](#) by a total of \$17 billion during the first three months of the COVID-19 pandemic alone.

The Fair Share Amendment is a proposal to amend the Massachusetts Constitution, creating an additional tax of four percentage points on the portion of a person's annual income above \$1 million. The new revenue, approximately \$2 billion a year, would be spent on "quality public education and affordable public colleges and universities, and for the repair and maintenance of roads, bridges and public transportation." To ensure that the amendment continues to apply only to the highest income taxpayers, who have the ability to pay more, the \$1 million threshold would be adjusted each year to reflect cost-of-living increases.

In June 2021, with a vote of 159 in favor to 41 opposed, the Legislature's Constitutional Convention voted to place the Fair Share Amendment on the November 2022 statewide ballot, where it is now set to be decided on by the voters. Independent [polling](#) conducted by MassINC in December 2020 found that 72 percent of MA voters support the Fair Share Amendment.

Our wealthiest residents can clearly afford to pay a little more to fund the investments we all need. It's time to pass the Fair Share Amendment and invest in our future! Information shared through <https://www.raiseupma.org/>

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**From The American Friends Service Committee:**

The American Friends Service Committee is working to create, strengthen and sustain deeper relationships between Monthly and Yearly Meetings. Our goal is to connect with Friends in a more intentional way, and we write to you to find the connections that may be willing to support and strengthen this relationship.

**We are seeking AFSC Meeting/Church liaisons.** Friends in this role would be key in facilitating connections and communications between their Monthly Meeting and AFSC. They will be responsible for forwarding AFSC engagement opportunities to their Monthly Meeting's newsletter, listserv, and/or social media sites, and announce key activities. We hope these Friends would organize and mobilize their Monthly Meeting community for specific engagement opportunities. We are currently building infrastructure for this communication, and we appreciate your patience during this process. We would love to receive names of other key contacts as well, such as newsletter editor, peace and social concerns clerk, clerk, etc. There is room on the form to identify these roles as well.

Resources we have for Friends include our Friends Engage <https://www.afsc.org/friends-engage> with lists of workshops available for meetings/churches, ways to host events, the Quaker social change ministry manual, and other engagement opportunities. Please take a look and pass along the Friends Engage opportunities. We also wanted to share the AFSC Corporation program <https://www.afsc.org/corpprogram> which focused on different dimensions of abolition and included an event on Quakers and abolition today. We wrote a report for yearly meetings this year, which you can find here <https://www.afsc.org/blogs/acting-in-faith/hope-discipline>.

As working to end white supremacy is such a rising concern among Friends, I wanted to share a few of the resources we have to support that work. A coalition of Quaker organizations (AFSC, Friends Council on Education, FGC, and Pendle Hill) launched an initiative to accelerate racial justice work among and beyond Friends through a 10-month Quakers uprooting racism community of practice. The cohort will meet for two retreats and in monthly online sessions to learn tools, strategies, deepen analysis, and plan and experiment with actions. Learn more here <https://www.afsc.org/quakers-uprooting-racism>. In response to George Floyd's murder, AFSC and partners created the online course Radical Acting in Faith for white people, now a standalone free online course that anyone can take to strengthen anti-racist practice <https://www.afsc.org/radicalAIF>. And for working on principled accompaniment as anti-racist practice, we also recommend our e-course, Changing Systems, Changing Ourselves: Anti-racist practice for Sanctuary, accompaniment, and resistance <https://www.afsc.org/cscsco-mainpage>. We hope you will help us to stay better connected and in touch as we create and share these opportunities. We invite Quaker meetings to share names of liaisons, and other contacts at <https://www.afsc.org/friends-liaison-contact-information>.

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**Scheduled Meetings**

**Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business** Second Sunday, 9AM

All are invited via Zoom.

<https://zoom.us/j/92774446613?pwd=M2lyeWJjZVpqTHB4bTJNdWRyRnlhZz09>

**Meeting ID: 927 7444 6613**

**Passcode: 253544**

Spiritual Life Committee-Tom Brenner Third Sunday, 9:30 AM

Practical Committee-Karen Sargent First Sunday, 9:30 AM

Peace, Social Concerns and Outreach-Lucy Candib & Richard Schmitt

All are invited via Zoom. Fourth Sunday, 9:30 AM

**PASCO Meeting**

Time: This is a recurring meeting 4th Sunday at 9:30 am

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/94128999438?pwd=NkM3TmRoQ2JZSDhtKzItSUI2eFRxdz09>

**Meeting ID: 941 2899 9438**

**Passcode: 948220**

Clerk of Worcester Friends Meeting-Daron Barnard

Recording Clerk-Katharine Barnard

Corresponding Clerk-Mary Chenaille

First Day School-Michelle Flint, Matt Shorten

Newsletter-Sheila Brenner

Please send general correspondence to [info@worcesterfriendsmeeting.org](mailto:info@worcesterfriendsmeeting.org).

Donations are appreciated and can be mailed to Worcester Friends Meeting

901 Pleasant St.

Worcester, MA 01602.