

Worcester Friends Newsletter

September 2018



Stephen Aldrich Fund

The impact of contemporary economic change and the need of individuals and families is all around us. We sense the need, but often ask, “What can I do?”

Much as we ask this question today, Stephen Aldrich asked and responded in the 1800’s by bequeathing a large portion of his estate to the [RI-Smithfield} Quarterly Meeting to provide emergency funding for Friends in need. This bequeath continues today as the Stephen Aldrich Fund and is available to all members of the Meeting community seeking one-time emergency financial assistance.

Individuals needing assistance or those who would like further information regarding the Fund should contact our Meeting’s representative, **Paul Gallagher**. All contact is held strictly in confidence.

Calendar

Sunday Meeting for Worship: 11 A.M.

Children’s Program: 11 A.M. (childcare year-round, First Day School program during school year)

Potluck Lunch: 12.15 P.M. every Sunday. Stay for fellowship.

Business Meeting: 2nd Sunday each month at 9 A.M.

The Meetinghouse is Handicapped Accessible

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, 9/16, 5:30. pm. Community Supper at the Meetinghouse. Invite friends. Contact Mary Chenaille for more information.

Saturday, 9/22, 9:00 am.–3:00 pm. Autumn Market Day. Baking on Friday, 9/21 eve. Contact Karen Sargent for more information.

Thursday, 10/4, 2:30–4:30 pm. Elm Park, Catholic Worker led march and vigil for CO2 free energy. See page 3 inside.

Tuesday, 10/9, 5:30-7:30 pm. Worcester Interfaith 25th Anniversary celebration. See page 7.

Monday, 10/15, 8-9:30 am, YWCA Daybreak Breakfast for awareness of domestic violence in our community at Holy Cross college. See page 7.

Saturday, 10/27, All Day, Living Faith Gathering in Hartford, CT. see <https://neym.org/living-faith-gatherings> for registration information.

Monthly Meeting for Business, Worcester Friends Meeting September 9, 2018

Clerking: Matthew Shorten

Present: Daron Barnard, Katharine Barnard, Tom Brenner, Clarence Burley, Karen Sargent, Matthew Shorten, Mark Sullivan, Kevin Walsh

The meeting opened with silent worship and a reading from NEYM Faith and Practice on the manner in which Friends live their testimonies.

Announcements:

1. The Center for Nonviolent Solutions is experiencing a deficiency in funding, and as a consequence is having difficulty continuing their programs and hiring the necessary staff. They are looking into establishing a collaboration with Worcester State University but if this is not successful, they unfortunately may find that they need to close.
2. Matthew Shorten reports that he has been participating in a collaborative project with Claire Shaffer-Duffy of CNVS in teaching nonviolence techniques to outreach workers in Worcester. This is funded through a grant from Worcester Police Department and Worcester Community Action Council, channeled through CNVS.
3. There is a recent concern that the building has not been closed up properly. Practical Committee is asked to consider a systematic way to address this.
4. The Clerk read from NEYM's "Talking Points" from Annual Sessions, which provides a summary of discussions from Sessions and followup items for Monthly Meetings to consider. We made note of the discussion on the Poor Peoples' Campaign and PSCO can consider connecting with the Campaign's activities. PSCO is also interested in Salem Quarter's activities on criminal justice reform. The Faith and Practice revision committee has two sections available for our review. It is noted that the "Talking Points" are available on the NEYM website for those who would like to review them further.

Business Items:

NEYM has requested Monthly Meetings to forward minutes from business meetings and committee meetings for inclusion in the NEYM Archives. We would like to offer business meeting minutes to NEYM as these include a distillation of our committees' work. We also have years of material (photos, paper records, etc) stored in the third floor of the Meetinghouse. Katharine Barnard will contact NEYM to assess their interest in the older material as well as to ascertain in what format they would like the newer minutes which we have electronically. The Recording Clerk will also archive past and future minutes on the Meeting's computer (and back up on external hard drive).

Treasurers Report:

We are running close to budget with income and most expenses. It is notable that our expense for gas is much higher than expected, through a combination of increased use (heating) and increased prices. The Annual Appeal letter has not yet been sent out; Daron Barnard will forward a copy of a prior year's Appeal to the Treasurer to use for writing this year's letter. Overall, we are running less of a deficit than anticipated for this time of the year.

NEYM finances were discussed. The Clerk notes that NEYM announced a recent decision to reduce contributions to Quaker organizations (including FWCC) in an effort to balance their budget. Our Meeting still feels strong opposition to FUM's personnel policy adversely affecting same-sex couples, and does not wish to direct more money to that organization. Additionally, it is noted that NEYM came up short for funding Sessions (approximately \$5000), and Friends who wish to contribute could do so before the September 30 close of NEYM's fiscal year. In prior years, our Meeting has contributed to NEYM to make up the shortfall but we do not plan to do so at this time.

Committee Reports:

Practical: The committee met last week and considered many small Meetinghouse repairs that are needed, including more intensive repair to the handicap ramp. The committee is collecting quotes for major projects including siding, tree removal and driveway reconstruction. Market Day is planned for September 22, and Karen Sargent is organizing volunteers, pie-making, vendor registration and publicity.

Spiritual Life: The Meeting can anticipate a visit by Holy Cross religious studies students. Spiritual Life members are working with their professor to plan their visits so as to meet their needs. We would like to again offer predictable childcare so as to be welcoming to attenders with young children. We seek childcare for worship hours only, as there is not a current need for coverage during business meeting. We are interviewing candidates for this position, who would be paid \$15 for the hour. Katharine Barnard reported a plan for engaging adult Friends in teaching First Day School and a standard format for First Day lessons. The committee forwards a recommendation for membership for Lucy Candib and Richard Schmitt, who met with their clearness committee in July. The recommendation is joyfully approved by Business Meeting, and the new members will be welcomed into membership and offered their choice of a copy of NEYM Faith and Practice or a year's subscription to Friends Journal. The Meeting's Recorder will notify the Quarter and NEYM of the new memberships.

PSCO: The Facing Race reading group continues to meet. Committee members will continue to be in contact with the Grace Hotel with intention to again supply dinners for their cold-weather shelter. The committee is looking for large kitchen in which the meals could be prepared, and there are a couple of churches that may provide these facilities. Clarence Burley announced ongoing preparations for the Climate Change Action planned for October 3, headed by Scott Schaefer-Duffy.

The meeting closed with silence.

In the Light,

Katharine Barnard

St Francis Day Climate Change Actions Thursday, October 4, 2018



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| 2:45-3 pm Worcester | Gather for Drumming in Elm Park at the corner of Highland and Park Avenue in Worcester |
| 3pm | Speakers (To be announced) |
| 3:15 pm | March on Park Avenue to the Bank of America to leaflet, hold signs, banners |
| 3:30 pm | March on Park Avenue to TD Bank to leaflet, hold signs, banners |
| 4 pm | Cross Park Avenue to the Gulf gas station at the corner of Pleasant and Park Avenue to leaflet, hold signs, banners |

Planning Meetings on Sunday September 8 and 23 from 2-3 pm at Saints Francis & Therese Catholic Worker, 52 Mason Street, Worcester

Artists, musicians, scientists, secular and religious activists, and all concerned about climate change are especially welcome.

All those interested in nonviolent civil disobedience must have nonviolence training.

For more information, contact Scott Schaeffer-Duffy at thereseecs2@gmail.com, 598-753-3588.

Thoughts on “beloved community”, or on being a Quaker physician in 2018

Friends, deal plainly with yourselves, and let the eternal light search you and try you, for this will deal plainly with you; it will rip you up, lay you open, and make all manifest that lodgeth within you...Provoke one another to love...
– Margaret Fell (Epistle to convinced Friends, 1656)

I have always known that it was of utmost importance to me that my professional life be congruent with my spiritual values. In family medicine I have found daily work that involves deep listening, caring for all patients equitably, and shaping my skills to be of service to a community. In conducting asylum evaluations, I have deepened my experience of bearing witness to suffering, and have seen the value of being heard. I experience trust as a gift, and I know that my trustworthiness is earned.

Fundamental to Quakerism is the belief in the presence of God’s spirit within each living being, and therefore in the equality and dignity of all humans. As such, Quakers have always found themselves involved in work against bias and inequity, and for the benefit of those who live at the margins. Involvement in prison reform and advocacy for the rights of inmates is one such example. At this historical juncture in our country, we are called more urgently than ever to protect and lift up ideals of social justice. We see the broad swath of work before us: combating the school-to-prison pipeline and mass incarceration, joining in efforts to slow climate change, advocating for the poor, supporting Black Lives Matter and other campaigns against racism, and on an individual level, responding with love in this climate of fear and blame. In 2017, the gathered body at the Annual Sessions of New England Yearly Meeting (Quakers), in considering the importance of supporting refugees and undocumented immigrants, affirmed the following minute:

As members of the Religious Society of Friends (Quaker), we believe that the human family is one family; that there is that of God in every member of this family; and that generosity of spirit toward all the members of the human family is of overriding importance. (2017-42)

The theme of this year’s Sessions was, “In fear and trembling, be bold in God’s service”. As I sat this week with the idea, I began to understand the statement as a call to action.

Quakers believe that the world we seek is here, now. Some would call it a “blessed community”; others call it the “Kingdom of God”. It is available to all of us because we all live in it, but requires that we all work to create it. Our task is to visualize the world as the just, kind, and loving place that we know and wish it to be, and then to take steps to make it a reality. Those steps require boldness and challenge, and certainly will require accepting change. The process will be uncomfortable, even messy, and we will likely stumble along the way.

The community must be inclusive of everyone, regardless of theology, background, race, gender identity, or financial status. It requires deep and committed listening, and a willingness to take risks together. It requires those of us with privilege to lay down our defensiveness, fragility and guilt as we educate ourselves on our own complicity in racism and other injustices. It requires us all to relinquish a sense of ownership for the outcome, and to participate in the process as in a truly shared journey.

This is where the “fear and trembling” comes in. Radical action requires us to allow ourselves to be vulnerable. Letting go of privilege and security is scary. How much risk am I willing to take? As a parent, how can I risk without exposing my family? As a physician, how can I risk without compromising my job or my license? I ask myself: How radical am I willing to be? Conversely, if I am acting as my true self, how can I *not* be radical?

We will need support as we travel on this journey; only when people are supported can they open themselves to this process. How can I listen deeply to others? How can I show it, and build trust? We also need love. There are many examples around us of strident voices, advocating from a place of anger. But, rather than fueling segregation and fear, we need to build community and trust.

What does this mean to me as a Quaker physician? It means that “serving the community” is not just a matter of practicing clinical skills, but also advocating broadly and fearlessly. It means recognizing and calling out systemic injustices as they affect the community that we care for – that health equity cannot be achieved until societal inequities are resolved. More than systems work, it requires me to engage in personal reflection, to be vulnerable and be willing to change. It means accepting that I benefit from and play a role in perpetuating the inequalities on which our society is built. Once I have acknowledged this, I must then work to dismantle those inequities. The recent closure of Plumley Village Health Services provided one such opportunity to speak out and speak clearly, to realign my work and my values – though it required making uncomfortable decisions and actions. What comes next?

I am to act, when is the right moment? Is it now? What will push me to action?

Learn to live your life with all your heart and all your soul and all your mind and love all humankind as you would love yourself... We've got hope down deep inside because in love we do reside... (folksong)

—**Katharine Barnard**

Talking Points from NEYM Sessions 2018

Continuing Support for Immigrants and Refugees: Friends shared news of the responses to Sessions’ minuted commitment (Minute 2017- 42) to support the rights and dignity of all of our neighbors who are threatened in this time, including especially undocumented immigrants, refugees, and Muslims. We heard about some of the myriad ways that Friends and Friends Meetings throughout New England have been responding to this commitment. Friends approved the formation of an Immigration Justice working group to bring together Quakers across New England who are under the weight of this concern, and committed the support of the yearly meeting to this group. If Friends in your meeting are engaged in ministry in support of these concerns and would like to connect with others similarly involved, please contact the Yearly Meeting office at neym@neym.org.

Continuing to Respond to the Climate Crisis: At the recommendation of the NEYM Earthcare Ministries Committee, those gathered affirmed a commitment to using the Cape Cod Climate Change Collaborative’s carbon calculator to calculate their carbon footprint and commit to a 10% reduction from baseline measures this fall by December 2019, and to encourage Friends throughout New England to do the same. More detailed information on support for this work will be forthcoming from the Earthcare Ministries Committee.

Poor People’s Campaign: At the recommendation of Vassalboro Quarterly Meeting, Friends approved New England Yearly Meeting endorsing the Poor People’s Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival. Sessions encourages Friends and Friends Meetings to “...unite with the Poor People’s Campaign by working to change the war on the poor to a condemnation and eradication of poverty itself, and to become involved through volunteering, organizing and/or financially supporting the coming together of many people across many different spectrums to further the witness of the Poor People’s Campaign.”

Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons: Connecticut Valley Quarterly Meeting brought forward a minute asking that the Yearly Meeting “...encourage Friends in New England to seek ways to support [the 2017 United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons] and... inform people about it.” Friends approved sharing this minute with local and Quarterly Meetings. **Criminal Justice Reform:** Salem Quarterly Meeting asked Sessions to support a minute stating their “...support [for] comprehensive criminal justice reform in Massachusetts that will promote restorative justice, support alternatives to incarceration, reform the pretrial process, and reduce the criminalization of poverty and race.” The minute further invites Friends, and meetings across New England to “join [Salem Quarterly Meeting] in the work of repairing and restoring our communities by reforming our criminal justice system.” Friends affirmed this minute as well seasoned, and asked that the Clerk share this minute with other quarters for discernment and further action.

Legacy Gift Funds: Friends gathered were moved by a slideshow of images of the many ways in which the Funds have been being used to support the ministry of New England Quakers in the areas of racial justice, climate change, outreach, religious education and more, coming soon to the NEYM YouTube channel. A list of recent grant recipients can be found on the NEYM website. The deadline for the next round of grants is October 1, 2018. For more information and to apply, visit neym.org/legacy-gift

Faith and Practice Revision: As part of the Yearly Meeting’s ongoing process of revising the book of Faith and Practice for Quakers in New England, Friends considered a draft paper on Membership. Important questions arose, including consideration of the effect that approving a practice of dual membership might have on our understanding of the core commitments of our tradition. Two additional draft papers were presented for comment—one on Pastoral Care and one on Death, Dying, and Bereavement. Meetings are encouraged to further engage corporately with the material presented, and to share with the Faith and Practice Revision Committee what unity and wisdom they receive, trusting in the guidance of the Spirit in our midst. The draft chapter on membership is available [here](#). For further information, or to share your meeting’s responses, contact Phebe McCosker (Hanover, NH, Friends Meeting), Clerk of Faith and Practice Revision Committee, or visit neym.org/fprevision.

Transforming our Relationship with Money: After five years of dedicated and faithful work, its charge fulfilled, we celebrated the laying down of the Ad Hoc Long Term Financial Planning Committee. The Finance Committee’s proposal of a balanced budget for the coming fiscal year—the fruit of a diligent process including both expense reductions and increased income—included a reduction of the total amount of New England Yearly Meeting’s donations to three of the organizations of which NEYM is a member (Friends United Meeting, Friends World Committee for Consultation, and Friends General Conference). This provided Friends in attendance an opportunity to engage with the dynamic tension between our responsibility for fiscal stewardship, and our responsibility and commitment to support the work of the wider Quaker movement of which we are an inextricable part. After much discernment and with a sense of God’s continual provision, Friends approved maintaining our current level of support for these three organizations, recognizing that further increases in contributions from meetings and individuals will be needed to prevent a deficit in the coming year.



This was the first time that I went to Sessions. It was a lot of fun. I made new friends. I went swimming. I was in a group where we made a cardboard community. We built buildings out of cardboard and made it a Quaker community. The food was really good, especially mac and cheese. I stayed in a dormitory. Sessions was like a JYM retreat but bigger. We sang songs. We rode bikes and scooters and skateboards. I read a letter in front of all the Friends. The letter was from another Quaker Meeting where they wrote what they did in their Meeting. The best part was that I got to see my friend, JoAnna Mikkelsen.

—Marrie Brenner

Marrie Brenner and JoAnna Mikkelsen at Sessions 2018

Addition to WFM Library

William and Mary Dyer, Quaker Light and Puritan Ambition, by Johan Winsser, (2017) at last gives us a scholarly account of the life and death of the best known Quaker martyr of colonial Massachusetts Bay.

Scholarly insofar as the scant mention of women in colonial records allows, the book is scholarly as measured by the 120 pages of appendices and notes for 185 pages of text.

William Dyer (his preferred spelling) emerges from these pages as a true renaissance man: merchant, milliner, trader with natives, farmer, surveyor, real estate speculator, Recorder and Secretary of Rhode Island, Attorney General of Providence Plantations, and Colonial Agent in England to secure the 1663 charter for the combined colonies, Rhode Island and Providence Plantations. William is remembered today by Dyer Island which he once owned in Narragansett Bay. But most of all he is remembered in this book as a loving and supportive husband of Mary in her “zeal so great as thus to adventure”—his words in a last letter to the magistrates of Boston vainly pleading for clemency prior to her execution June 1, 1660, at Boston Neck (Washington St. in today’s South End), not Boston Common as erroneously carved on her State House memorial statue.

—Clarence Burley



Worcester Interfaith is celebrating its 25th Anniversary Event on Tuesday, October 9 from 5:30 – 7:30 at First Baptist Church, 111 Park Ave, Worcester, MA 01609, to celebrate 25 years of accomplishments, say goodbye to Frank Kartheiser, and meet the new Lead Organizer. The event will feature serving hors d’oeuvres, a cash bar and live entertainment. Click here to buy tickets: <http://bit.ly/25YearsofWorcesterInterfaith> If you’d like to place an ad or wish Frank a happy retirement in our ad book, please contact Sarah at sarah@newera4nonprofits.com

October is National Domestic Violence Awareness Month

As the largest network of domestic violence service providers in the country, YWCA remains committed to reducing violence against women and girls. The need is very real. Every month, 46 women are shot to death by a current or former partner, and intimate partner homicides account for nearly half of all women killed each year in the United States. Domestic Violence Services at the YWCA provide direct and comprehensive support to survivors of domestic violence, and work to create community solutions that prevent domestic violence and promote healthy relationships.

The annual YWCA Daybreak Breakfast will be held on Monday, October 15 (8 – 9:30 am) at the Hogan Center of the College of the Holy Cross. This year’s topic is Who Speaks for Me? Young Survivors of Domestic Violence and the State of the Law. Guest speaker, Jacquelynne J. Bowman, Executive Director of Greater Boston Legal Services will discuss the ways in which current systems must adapt to make room for each child’s voice when determining how we support them, and the changes that must be made in how the court system responds to survivors. Register at <https://ywcacm.org/daybreak-breakfast-registration/>

Worcester Friends Meeting
Religious Society of Friends
(Quakers)
901 Pleasant Street
Worcester, MA 01602



Scheduled Meetings

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| Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business----- | Second Sunday, 9 AM |
| Spiritual Life Committee, Daron Barnard & Mary Bennett----- | Fourth Sunday, 9:30 AM |
| Practical Committee, Kevin Walsh----- | First Sunday, 9:30 AM |
| Peace/Social Concerns/Outreach, Tom Brenner----- | Fourth Saturday, 9:30 AM |
| Clerk of Worcester Friends Meeting----- | Matthew Shorten |
| Recording Clerk----- | Katharine Barnard |
| Corresponding Clerk----- | Clarence Burley |
| First Day School----- | Katharine Barnard, Sheila Brenner, |
| Tyler Green, Matt Shorten | |
| Newsletter----- | Sheila Brenner |

Please send general correspondence to info@worcesterfriendsmeeting.org. Items of note for the next Newsletter may also be sent to brennerfamily@gmail.com or dropped off at MeetingHouse.