

Worcester Friends Meeting

Religious Society of Friends (Quaker)

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October - November 2012

ADVICE & QUERIES

What in my present life distracts me from God? – *Baltimore Yearly Meeting*

How do I discern what constitutes simplicity for me? – *Earlham College*

Are you free from the burden of unnecessary possessions? – *Northwest Yearly Meeting*

Do I choose with care the use of technology and devices that truly simplify and add quality to my life without adding undue burden to essential resources? – *Philadelphia Yearly Meeting*

Do you take care that your spiritual growth is not sacrificed to busyness but instead integrates your life's activities?
– *New England Yearly Meeting*

Clerk's Corner

by Clarence Burley

For where your treasure is there will your heart be also. (Luke 12:34)

This text challenges me on two Quaker testimonies. God has given me the ability in health, talent, time, opportunities, and a large measure of good luck to satisfy my immediate needs and fulfill my family responsibilities in abundance (well, relative abundance, relative to the real need of so many others.)

So I wonder:

Am I exemplifying Simplicity, my own personal brand of Simplicity? Is the money I spend simply leaking away, giving me only momentary satisfaction? Will I later look back and ask, "Why did I ever buy that thing? Did I really think I needed to have a moment of satisfaction in order to collect so much dust? It could have been used to help others, to improve the world, to benefit the Society of Friends."

A wise old priest (yes, asking for money) once said, "You will never miss what you give away." I have found that he spoke truly. I have often regretted the money I spent for luxuries that I thought I needed, but the money I have given away has left me no reminders to mock my failure to testify to Simplicity.

And my wonder goes further:

Is my heart truly where my treasure is? I know that my financial gifts work for good, that they enter the stream of grace that flowed to me and that I am now channeling on to another child of God. That is all very good. But is the text correct? Is my heart going with these gifts? Am I truly integrating what ever goodness, whatever love, there is in my heart with the financial gift? Am I giving just to feel influential or powerful? I hope not. Am I giving only because a friend persists? Or to interact with that cute co-ed with the Special Olympics can and the big smile at the traffic light? I wish for a valid gift, but my heart is not always flowing in that current of grace. I must launch my heart, my good will, my prayers, my time and my talents into that flow if I wish to witness to Quaker Integrity.

At October's meeting for business we heard the Query, "Do you undertake your proper share of the work and financial support of the Meeting?" Please, God, give me the grace to answer, "Yes."

The Board of the Center for Nonviolent Solutions had a very fine retreat on September 8th, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., at Maryhouse in Spencer, with all members present.

During the Meeting, several members expressed their deep appreciation to Friends Meeting for many kindnesses--including the new carpet--and other arrangements to make their office comfortable.

The Center now has more requests for programs, particularly in the schools--for courses in nonviolence, nonviolent communication, and peer mediation-- than we can meet. So things are going well. The problem is paying staff, etc., since the Worcester Public Schools provides nothing for our services. Nonetheless, we have devoted staff, Board, and volunteers committed to sustaining the organization.

Ripples from Quaker Quest



Last month we received an Email from Bill Chadkirk, a Friend in England. He saw our image of the “dancing Quaker” from our Quaker Quest outreach, and wanted to use it at his meeting’s Quaker Quest.

In the digital communications between our Clerk and the English Friend, Bill Chadkirk wrote:

I've just returned from Cordoba, in southern Spain. One of our children is attending Cordoba University for a year as part of an English and Spanish degree course (part of an inter-European student exchange programme called the Erasmus scheme) and we went to find accommodation. It's fascinating. After the 8th century invasion of Europe by Islam, a Mosque was built on the foundations of a Roman temple, above which an Byzantium church had been built. After Ferdinand and Isabella drove Islam from Spain, the Mosque / church was converted to a Catholic cathedral. Once inside you're walking on a Roman floor, under a

Muslim roof supported by Byzantium columns, housing a western Christian alter. And somehow it all hangs together as a beautiful whole. Very inspiring and humbling.

Editor: - The note reminds me of the song, “We’re all a family under one sky”.

Bible Study with Geoff Knowlton on Third Sunday, September 16, 2012

Geoff Knowlton led Friends through four popular bible stories: the creation, the story of Noah and the great flood, the story of the Red Sea, and Jonah and the whale. Present were: Mary Bennett, Clarence Burley, Mary Chenaille, Katie Green, Betty Jones, and Betty and Brian Poynton,

Friends discussed the role of legend, folklore, historical events in these Old Testament stories. Together, they sought to identify the nugget of truth in each story. There was a lively discussion that everyone participated in. Geoff gently guided the discussion, and we benefited from his depth of knowledge. All present thoroughly enjoyed this meeting, and look forward to the next Bible Study with Geoff Knowlton. Watch your e-mail for an announcement.

Religious Education

Worcester Friends Meeting’s religious education committee has written a job description for our childcare providers. We are blessed with two very capable and caring young women, Annalee and Jen, who between them will cover all Sundays. Friends have agreed to volunteer to help with childcare on First Days when there are more than two youngsters in the nursery. Child care will also be available for Meeting for Worship with attention to Business, on second Sundays. This will enable families to participate more in the meeting.

First Day School children have been reading and playing with folktales from around the world and the Bible parables. The stories provide a format for discussing what it means to be a F/friend.

Elementary age Friends have continued attendance at the JYM retreats, most recently “Finding Peace” at Woolman Hill in September.

American Friends Service Committee – Southeast New England

On Sunday, October 21, 2012, for our third Sunday discussion, the Worcester Monthly Meeting hosted Martha Yager, staff person for AFSC-SENE. Martha described the past several years as being very challenging for AFSC. She said that under its new Director, Shan Cretin, AFSC had gotten its financial house back in order. To do so, half of the staff positions were cut, and nine regional offices were reduced to four.

Much of Martha's work has focused on support for immigrant communities that are under attack. She spoke particularly about the Ecuadoran community of 6,000 people in Milford, and emphasized the importance of having white allies for immigrants. Support can range from the simple act of driving someone to the supermarket, to setting up meetings with local political and religious leaders, to lobbying in support of

legislation, such as restoring the rights of immigrants in Rhode Island to obtain a driver's license.

She commented on the challenges of connecting with the many small peace and social justice groups that exist in the Worcester area. Martha also observed that many activists no longer wanted to talk about the war in Afghanistan, for example, and that it was harder to get people to make phone calls, write letters, or sign petitions, although this can make a difference.

Describing our work as *Rebuilding Citizenship*, Martha said that the focus must be local. As an example of a successful project, she cited the joint sponsorship of AFSC and the Worcester Friends Meeting in publishing the **Ribbon Budget** advertisements in *Worcester Magazine*, which she said resulted in forty hits on a special web page set up for the project.

A Recognition Luncheon Honoring Michael D. True

On Saturday, October 20th, over 180 people gathered at Clark University to honor Mike True for his decades of activism, and his work developing and promoting peace studies programs at colleges and universities in the U.S. and abroad.

The luncheon event was hosted by the Center for Nonviolent Solutions, a Worcester-based non-profit organization that offers non-violent conflict resolution education and mediation training and services, one of many organizations that Mike was instrumental in establishing.

Fifteen members of the Worcester Monthly Meeting were on hand to hear a *Reflection* on Mike's life offered by Dave O'Brien, and a keynote *Confessions of an International Peace Resolver* offered by Worcester native Eileen F. Babbitt, now Professor of International Conflict Management Practice at Tufts University.



Mike True, October 20th

Did You Know... (Part 1)

The reason that Friends have not seen Karen Sargent at Meeting for Worship is that she has been in Malaysia. She sent a postcard picturing places of worship there for Hindu, Confucian, and Islamic. Surely, Karen will have stories to share when she returns.

Katharine Barnard will be returning to Honduras in November. She goes to Honduras every year to share her medical knowledge.

Mary Chenaille recently returned from a three week trip to Florida where she visited her mother and sister. She had a great visit and drove back to Worcester in a "new" silver Buick Century sedan. Her sister says it's a "chick magnet for women over 65."

Congrats and best wishes for Ben Izarralde who is now working as a reference librarian at the Worcester Public Library.

Governance of Quaker Meetings

One of the challenges of being a small, un-programmed Quaker meeting is that we have a limited number of members and attenders to call upon to perform the many tasks required to keep our faith community alive and vibrant.

That has been the traditional response given whenever a member laments the amount of time it takes to accomplish something. The challenges of Quaker governance are not limited to small Monthly Meetings, but are experienced by some of the largest and oldest Yearly Meetings as well.

The October issue of *Friends Journal* <http://www.friendsjournal.org/> contains a number of interesting articles about how we as Quakers conduct our affairs. In this issue, Norval Reece writes about Governance in the article, *Learning from Quakers in Corporate America*. If you have the opportunity to read this issue of *Friends Journal* (or even if you don't), please take some time to reflect on your own relationship to Worcester Friends Meeting.

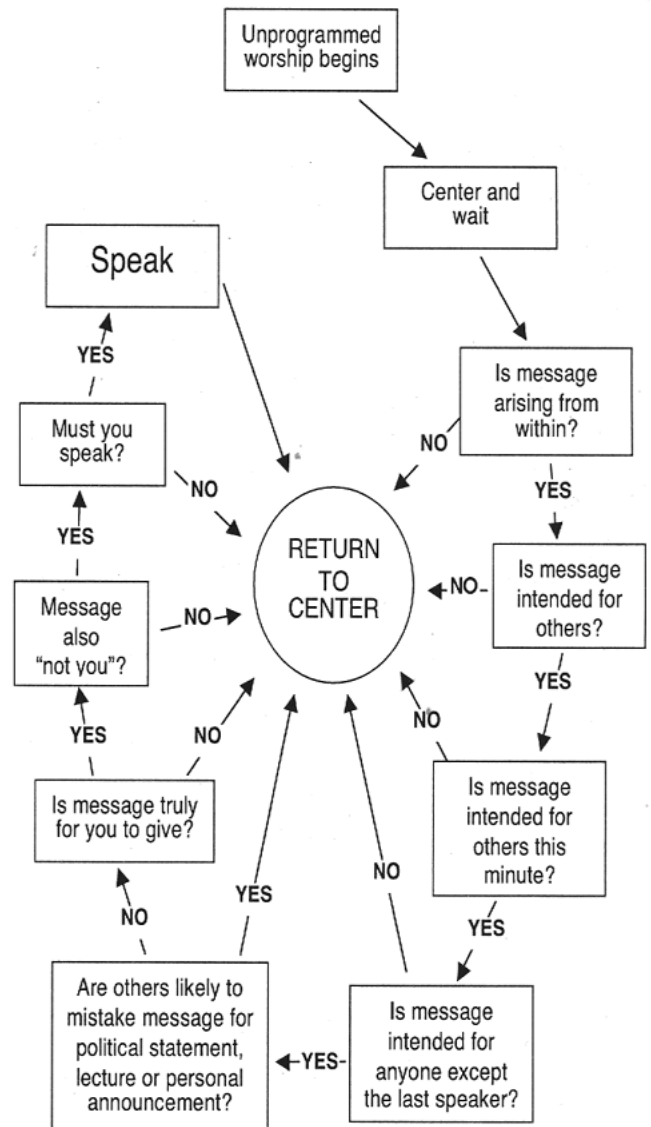
As an unprogrammed Quaker meeting, we have no paid staff; *what happens at the meetinghouse at meeting for worship and other times occurs because of us!* Being a Quaker is not separate from our daily life; it is the way we live and the way we worship.

We attend a Quaker meeting for worship because we value being part of a spiritual community. We must recognize that personal talents and strengths are gifts which are enhanced when shared with others.

Over the next several months our Nominating Committee will be asking members and attenders how they would like to serve the Meeting. Christopher McCandless, a former Clerk of the New England Yearly Meeting, presently serves as Clerk of its Nominating Committee. "Rather than trying to fill slots," he said, "I look for people with gifts, and encourage them to reflect on how they can best share their gifts with the Meeting."

Attenders are welcome and encouraged to serve on committees, it is a great way to deepen your connection to the Monthly Meeting, and get to know people better.

Guide to Unprogrammed Worship



From pamphlet on Worship by Wellesley (MA) Friends Meeting, based on a chart by Sydney Chambers in the October 2005 issue of *Friends Journal*, "Speaking into the Silence"

Did You Know... (Part 2)

Clarence Burley will be finishing his seasonal work at Old Sturbridge Village, and will be at the on-going Peace Vigils at 3:30 PM on Tuesdays at Lincoln Square.

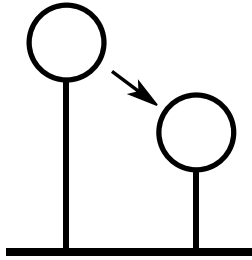
Betty and Brian Poynton are planning to move to North Carolina in the springtime. Worcester Friends cannot imagine the Meeting without them, and we are comforted that they will be joining Quakers in their new community.

Worcester Interfaith Leaders Meeting - September 25, 2012

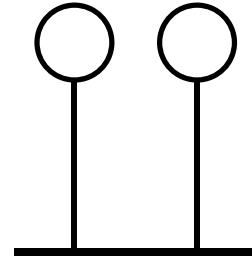
Frank Kartheizer facilitated the September meeting of Worcester Interfaith (WI), which was held at the First Baptist Church on Park Ave. Twelve institutions were represented by thirteen people, as two Friends were there: Phil Stone and Katie Green. The meeting consisted of sharing what each viewed as a priority.

Rev. Kevin Bean of All Saints Episcopal made a presentation about Social Action: What is it anyway? Biblical references were attached to a quadrant representing styles of community work and social ministry. It was noted that churches tend to put a lot of energy into attempting to fix the system and helping individuals deal with the system, rather than working to change the present order and create alternative structures and institutions. The importance of working together was stressed. The tension between social service and social action was addressed.

These two diagrams capture the difference between social service and social action:



Social service deals with effects.
You do something FOR someone.
Charity



Social Action deals with with causes.
You do something WITH someone.
Justice

Many Worcester Friends volunteer and some are employed in social service, dealing with the needs and problems of individuals. Others volunteer their time doing social action. Our Meeting has several small social service projects: we collect white socks for people who are homeless; we bring in toiletries for needy people in Fitchburg; we serve dinner at Dismas House once a month. As a Quaker Meeting, we are not involved in any corporate social action such as WI is attempting to define.

Those who were present at WI's September meeting named several areas of concern: poverty, education, lack of jobs, and immigrant status. We know that AFSC-SENE is focusing on immigrant rights. IS there a role for Worcester Friends Meeting in Worcester Interfaith as this group searches for a way to create a just society?

The next Worcester Interfaith Meeting will be held on November 13 at 8 AM – 9 AM at the First Baptist Church, 111 Park Avenue, Worcester.

Did You Know... (Part 3)

The Mikkelsen family welcomes a new puppy. Friends will see Lacey, a young Cavalier Spaniel, lounging on a Mikkelsen lap or cuddling with Zika and JoAnna.

Meghan Sullivan (former member of the meeting) married Brian Chakulski on Sunday, September 2nd in Middletown, RI. The ceremony was officiated by Kevin Lee, recorded minister from Westport MM. Won Sullivan was maid of honor, and Meg's parents, Barbara and Mark, walked her down the aisle. The ceremony was held in a park near the ocean on a beautiful fall evening. Meg and Brian live in Connecticut where they both work at UTC Fuelcells.

From Doreen Velnick

This is my daily prayer:

Dear God, your world is wonderful

Your life is bountiful

Take care of those I love

Grow peace within my heart

And help me to enjoy

The wonders of your being

And then I thank God for knowing the

beautiful people at Worcester Friends Meeting.

FALL

In fall

sweet merges with bitter

warm days with cool nights

A chorus of color - -

yellows, reds and deep wine

sings for us

Days like leaves

slip away and die

autumn is

the good-bye season, the

Chinese called it a

time of grief

Release sorrows,

part with them and pause

Before cold winds blow away

Indian summer days.

s. kocher

The Word

O voice of the Holy Spirit, making known

Man to himself, o witness swift and sure,

Warning, approving, true and wise and pure,

O counsel and guidance that misleadeth none!

By thee the mystery of life is read;

The picture-writing of the world's gray seers,

The myths and parables of the primal years,

Whose letter kills, by thee interpreted

Take healthful meanings fitted to our needs,

And in the soul's vernacular express

The common law of simple righteousness.

Hatred of cant and doubt of human creeds

May well be felt: the unpardonable sin

Is to deny the Word of God within!

John Greenleaf Whittier



Larry Gragg's *The Quaker Community on Barbados: Changing the Culture of the Planter Class*, published recently by the University of Missouri Press, follows the history of the large Quaker community in Barbados in the 17th century, prior to the group's large-scale migration to Pennsylvania, a time when Barbados had more Quakers than any other English colony.

One never knows where a helpful query will come from.

I have found that my work with Alternative to Violence Program (AVP) is one of the most meaningful ways that I spend my time. You will often hear people whose ministry calls them to work with incarcerated persons say, "I leave the prison enriched. I often feel that the inmates give me more than I give them."

Last month, I facilitated an Advanced AVP workshop in a nearby prison. Facilitators also participate in the workshops when they are not leading the exercise. On the last day of the workshop we were working on apologies. As part of the exercise, we were given a suggested formula and instructed to write an apology to someone. Almost every man there had previously spoken about the pain their actions caused to their loved ones and family. Some of the workshop participants were "lifers"; they had killed another person.

Not to get into the pattern of my problems are more or less important, or bigger or smaller, than your problems, but..... The men in the workshop were in prison and I was not. Certainly we have all done things that we have regretted.

Participating in a workshop is not the same as therapy, and should especially not be considered therapeutic to an AVP facilitator! I decided to write an apology that was not emotionally charged. Something "safe".

I chose to write an apology to my new next-door neighbor. My dog's barking had disturbed her afternoon nap. I knew that she was distressed by barking dogs, but I was not aware that she was at home. Since the dog was young, I figured that I'd see how long she'd carry on. The puppy continued barking longer than I wished, and I had just brought her inside the house when my distraught neighbor came to my door. She made it clear to me that she did not approve of my attempts to train my dog not to bark.

Even though I had already written a note of apology to my neighbor after that incident, I decided that I would use that problem for my apology exercise.

Perhaps you can imagine my surprise and embarrassment to find myself weeping!! There I was - apologizing for my dog's barking when others were working on apologizing to their children for missing their graduations or weddings; apologizing to mothers or wives for letting them down; apologizing to victims' families. And I am apologizing for a barking dog!?

I read my apology to my group, and I apologized to them for being so emotional. Equitable Erick looked at me with gentle eyes and a tender smile. "Capricious," he said, "What is it that that you really want?" It was clear to him that the barking dog was not actually the difficulty.

I paused and thought. His query allowed me to become more aware of and to articulate a deep, personal longing. I answered, "I want to live in a neighborhood where there is a sense of community. Where people know and care about each other."

Believing that we are all children of God is one thing. Acting on that knowledge, taking the risk of caring for/about a neighbor is more difficult. I am thankful for the query Equitable Erick posed.

I am thankful for our Quaker tradition of ministering in prisons. Truly there is that of God in each of us. Give us the courage to risk loving each other and to create a caring spiritual community.



More information about AVP is available on their website. <http://www.avpusa.org/>.

Present: Clarence Burley, Katharine Barnard, Betty Jones, Betty Poynton, Brian Poynton, Matthew Shorten, Karen Sargent, Katie Green, Phil Stone, Paul Gallagher, Mary Bennett, Mary Chenaille

1-09-09-2012 Meeting opened with a period of silence and a reading and consideration of the poem "The Word" by John Greenleaf Whittier.

2-09-09-2012 Ministry and Council Committee report: Regarding membership: the Meeting will drop membership status of Deb McKinstry and Elizabeth Reitzel Lamb, and is clarifying others. This is approved with regrets. Jennifer Anderson and Christopher Boone have been accepted by Albuquerque Monthly Meeting of Friends for transfer of membership from Worcester.

Becker College students have produced a term paper related to their visit to the Meeting and this is available for all who would like to read it.

3-09-09-2012 PASCO Committee report: Virginia Swain has requested a letter of support from the Meeting for her re-application to Obadiah Brown Fund, and a letter will be written prior to the September 15 deadline. Mary Chenaille and Karen Sargent will work on Spring Market Day. It was also tentatively decided to hold a Spring Picnic with invitations to neighboring congregations. This Fall, we will plan a Fifth Sunday discussion of AFSC's publication "An Introduction to Quaker Testimonies" and are seeking a facilitator.

4-09-09-2012 Meeting declined a request from National War Tax Resistance Coordinating Committee to place a paid advertisement in their 30th anniversary edition newsletter.

5-09-09-2012 It was announced that the Center for Nonviolent Solutions is presenting a four-part series on conflict resolution starting on Ninth Month 30, to be held at 1pm at the Unitarian Universalist Church on Brattle St.

6-09-09-2012 Religious Education Committee Report: Committee is resolving the issue of providing reliable childcare to preschool age friends, extended to include the hours of Business. Meeting members have agreed to help with overflow childcare and a schedule is in place through November.

7-09-09-2012 Market Day Committee report: Guidelines have been prepared by Betty Poynton to standardize the logistics of Market Day, including advertisement and outreach to vendors.

8-09-09-2012 Building and Grounds Committee report: Completed projects: Replacement of planking on handicap ramp. Replacement toner for the upstairs copier. Projects in progress: This week, contractors will start replacement of counters, cabinets and wall paneling in the kitchen. Meeting members will assist with plumbing or electrical work if needed. A lock-box will be installed near the front door for secure storage of a key to the Meetinghouse for access by outside groups. Projects for consideration: Installation of switch-controlled ceiling fans (with lights) in the Meeting room and possible change in lighting for the Meeting room. B&G will bring further information to a future Business meeting.

9-09-09-2012 Trustees report: There is a budget shortfall due in part to decrease in donations. Additionally, it is noted that our per-member contribution to Yearly Meeting is proportionally high and is being reexamined. We seek to increase the level of support for the Meeting from Meeting members, and a "Fall Fund Appeal" letter will be drafted. The letter will include information about options for monthly donation. Outreach to our banking institution will seek to resolve current difficulties with automated monthly contribution option. A draft of a policy and fee schedule for rental of Meetinghouse space has been prepared. Further coordination of computer programs is needed in order for the treasurers to efficiently communicate information.

10-09-09-2012 Recorder reports that current membership numbers 36, including 8 non-resident members.

11-09-09-2012 "Guidelines for Use of the Meetinghouse" has been updated to include a fee schedule for rental by for-profit groups. A version for non-profit groups includes a recommended donation. The pamphlet will be further amended to include the expectation that renters will be financially responsible for repair of any damages. The Meeting welcomes use by groups with which we have philosophical congruence.

12-09-09-2012 Cemetery Committee: Meeting approves of sharing photographs of Lamb family headstones with a person seeking to compile a family genealogy.

13-09-09-2012 Personal and General Concerns: Geoff Knowlton's father, Chris, is ill and Meeting will hold Chris and his wife Jean in the light. Geoff happily announces that a sonnet of his will be published in a 2013 anthology of modern Quaker poetry. NEYM publicized an upcoming event at Concord NH Meeting encouraging Quakerquest. Two potential attendees seek assistance with transportation to Meeting.

14-09-09-2012 Meeting closed with a period of silence, purposing to meet again tenth month or at the call of the clerk.

Submitted in the Light,

Katharine Barnard, recording clerk

Present: Mark Sullivan, Betty Jones, Katharine Barnard, Mary Chenaille, Mary Bennett, Betty Poynton, Brian Poynton, Barbara Sullivan, Katie Green, Phil Stone, Matthew Shorten, Clarence Burley, clerk.

1-10-14-2012 Meeting began with a period of silence and a reading from NEYM queries on meeting for business.

2-10-14-2012 Ministry & Counsel reported on contacting friends regarding their membership status. They discussed spoken testimony in meeting for worship. The Overlook Worship Group is quite active.

3-10-14-2012 Peace & Social Concerns did not meet this month. Martha Yaeger will speak to the meeting next week at 9:30 AM on Sunday about the activities of her office of AFSC.

4-10-14-2012 The treasurer reported a \$2,916.39 deficit due to decreased donations from members/attenders. Market Days were somewhat more successful than expected. There was an extra unexpected expense in the need to replace the handicapped ramp.

5-10-14-2012 There was a discussion regarding the meeting's donation to NEYM in regards to the revised lower membership list and the responsibility of F(f)riends to support the meeting financially in light of the meeting's current financial situation. The trustees will be sending out the annual appeal letter soon. Friends ask that this matter be revisited next month.

6-10-14-2012 The meeting's hard drive is in danger of crashing. It is recommended that the computer be replaced. All work should be backed up to prevent loss. Friends ask that if someone has a computer to donate, please contact the meeting, otherwise we will consider purchasing one.

7-10-14-2012 The recorder notes the work done by Phil Stone and Josie Brown to gather old records and track down members. After updating the list, and removing long inactive names, the meeting currently has 36 members, 8 members are non-residents, 4 are children, and 4 are non-attenders. This leaves 20 members available to fill meeting positions/committees. A discussion ensued about outreach to attenders to join committees/become members and attract new people. It was noted that attendance has increased this year, and there is now often an attendance of 30 at meeting for worship.

8-10-14-2012 The cemetery committee continues to try to meet with Al Southwick. They have been in contact with Grace Blaber's son and the family is in the process of getting a stone for her grave.

9-10-14-2012 Religious Ed committee has written up a job description for the child care position. There are currently two high school students in this position. They hope to provide childcare for business meeting also. Friends have volunteered to help with infant care during meeting for worship as needed. A schedule for this has been posted in the meeting house. The committee is planning on updating the play equipment in the playroom. Friends who have toys in good condition are asked to consider donating them.

10-10-14-2012 Opportunity having been given for questions & concerns, meeting ended with a period of silence, purposing to meet again eleventh month, eleven, or at the call of the clerk.

Submitted in the Light,

Barbara Sullivan, recording clerk.

Scheduled Meetings

First Sunday 9:30 am	Trustees and Peace/Social Concerns
Second Sunday 9:00 am	Meeting for Worship w/ Attention to Business
Third Sunday 9:30 am	Discussion as scheduled
Fourth Sunday 9:30 am	Ministry and Counsel
Fifth Sunday 11:00 am	Intergenerational Worship
Worship Groups:	1st Wednesday, 3:30 PM at Overlook in Charlton

Worcester Friends Meeting is the "Meeting for eating." We hold a pot-luck lunch every week after the rise of the Meeting for Worship.

Voluntary Set-up before Meeting for Pot Luck Lunch If you are unable to set-up on your scheduled day, make arrangements or tell one of the committee members. Thank you for your understanding and your help.

10/28/12	Phil Stone	11/25/12	Mary Bennett	12/23/12	Clarence Burley
11/04/12	Barbara Sullivan	12/02/12	Daron Barnard	12/30/12	Mary Chenaille
11/11/12	Mark Sullivan	12/09/12	Katherine Barnard		
11/18/12	Michael True	12/16/12	Geoff Knowlton		

This is a voluntary responsibility. If you would like to be added to or removed from the list, please tell a committee member. If you have suggestions to add or remove anyone, your input is needed. Please contact Paul - 508-981-7285 - paulgallagherG@gmail.com

Editor of Newsletter: Katie Green. Deadline for next issue: December 15. Send contributions to katie@katiegreenstories.com

Clerk: Clarence Burley 508-735-4353. Watch your email for Weekly Friendly Reminders, or check our website:

<http://worcesterfriendsmeeting.org/calendar.htm>