

Nov./Dec. Worcester Friends Newsletter 2016



Calendar

Sunday Meeting for Worship: 11 A.M.

**Childrens' Program: 11 A.M.
(childcare year-round, First Day School program during school year)**

**Mid-week Meeting for Worship:
Wednesdays 7 P.M.**

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

Potluck Lunch: 12.15 P.M. every Sunday

The Meetinghouse is Handicapped Accessible

Changes in Schedule

January 2017

January 1, New Year's Day: no committee meetings

January 8: Spiritual Life and Practical Committees

January 15: Annual and Monthly Business Meeting

January 22: PSCO Committee

January 29: Continuation of retreat discussion on climate change

Minute of Support for Standing Rock from NEYM Committee on Racial, Social and Economic Justice Oct 25, 2016

"The Doctrine of Discovery was used to justify Christians 'right' to dominate, exploit and claim the lands of non-Christians ... It has the force of law globally and serves as a framework of oppression fully intact in U.S. federal Indian law today ... We as New England Yearly Meeting repudiate the Doctrine of Discovery. We are beginning a journey to consider the moral and spiritual implications...". -From NEYM Minute 2013-52

The Doctrine of Discovery speaks directly to the Dakota Access Pipeline as it encourages people of European descent and their corporations, with the support of law, to invade indigenous people [1], take their possessions and resources [2], and imprison [3] those who stand in the way. Not only does the pipeline create environmental devastation but it clearly demonstrates that the Doctrine of Discovery is very much alive and in operation. In the words of Chief Sitting Bull, "They claim this mother of ours, the Earth, for their own use, and fence their neighbors away from her, and deface her with their buildings and their refuse."

The Committee on Racial, Social & Economic Justice asks Friends to prayerfully consider appropriate responses and support for the indigenous protectors [4] who are putting their lives on the line at Standing Rock. Friends stated in NEYM Minute 2013-52 and previously in 2003's Minute on Racism that "Our first work is to remove the logs from our eyes so that we may see." We need to look at white privilege and the white supremacist attitudes that most of us of European descent carry unconsciously.

We seek a world in which all people can join together as equal and respected parts of the human family. We must let go of that which keeps us separated. By holding each other in respect and unconditional support, the divine spark within every individual joins in harmony with all others. Let us envision and work toward renewed commitment to justice, truth and respect blossoming in all our hearts, where we meet each other with Light and unconditional Love.

Some 75 souls gathered on a rainy Tuesday, November 15th evening on the first floor of Worcester City Hall to rally for a Heart—of the Commonwealth—Beat of LOVE and not hateful racism and discord. After the invocation, Jose Encarnacion, pastor of Christian Community Church and chair of sponsoring Worcester Interfaith, read the Statement and Pledge below to the approving assembly. Mayor Petty echoed the document on behalf of the city in the presence of City Manager Augustus and three city councilors—a voice in the crowd asked where the others were. Other speakers from minority groups voiced support and appreciation. Worcester Friends Meeting is among the 12 faith communities, 24 religious leaders, 16 community organizations and 12 political leaders supporting the statement and pledge at the time of the rally. Where are the others?
- -Clarence Burley

We stand in solidarity speaking directly to our neighbors, our co-workers, our sanitation workers, court advocates, store clerks and police officers. We stand in solidarity talking to all students and young people. We stand in solidarity speaking as mothers, fathers and parents, to the Refugee and Immigrant families who have fled pain-filled pasts to come to our city and also to those who count generations here; this city is YOUR HOME, it is OUR HOME. You are welcomed here, we are glad you are a part of our community and grateful for the many contributions offered through your presence. You are not only welcomed here you are appreciated & LOVED here! For years we have reprinted, emblazoned and trumpeted our City as the “Heart of the Commonwealth”. Today we are being challenged to make these words mean something. The events across our country and Commonwealth have challenged us to put our words into meaningful action.

As the heart of Massachusetts, Worcester must be a community committed to justice and ready to defend justice. We pledge today as community leaders, elected officials, community organizations and faith leaders to be voices that reject hate and racism. We pledge to challenge and resist those attacking immigrants and refugees, our transgender GLBTQJ brothers and sisters, Blacks, Latinos, and those who practice their faith, especially Muslims and Jews. We pledge to rebuff those who seek to create discord and hate. We pledge to denounce and challenge those who choose to demean and attack. We pledge to use our collective power to support and protect anyone who maybe targeted because of who they are. We know that many are fearful of the climate of animosity, racism, bitterness and hatred that has been stoked over the past few months. We will not be part of going backwards. We seek working together to ensure that, as the Heart of the Commonwealth, the only BEAT you hear in Worcester is that of LOVE and not hate.

NEYM Sessions 2017, “Living into Transformation”, will take place August 5-10, 2017 at Castleton University in Castleton, NY. The permanent Board of NEYM has announced that **Ruby Sales**, world renowned civil rights activist, will deliver the plenary address. Ms. Sales recently spoke to Krista Tippett in an On Being podcast:

... love is not antithetical to being outraged. Let's be very clear about that. And love is not antithetical to anger. There are two kinds of anger. There's redemptive anger, and there's non-redemptive anger. And so redemptive anger is the anger that says that — that moves you to transformation and human up-building. Non-redemptive anger is the anger that white supremacy roots itself in. So we have to make a distinction. So people think that anger, in itself, is a bad emotion, and it's where you begin your conversation... So most people begin their conversation with “I hate this”— but they never talk about what it is they love. And so I think that we have to begin to have a conversation that incorporates a vision of love with a vision of outrage. And I don't see those things as being over and against each other. I actually see them — you can't talk about injustice without talking about suffering. But the reason why I want to have justice is because I love everybody in my heart. And if I didn't have that feeling, that sense, then there would be no struggle.

You can hear/read the entire conversation with Ruby Sales at <http://www.onbeing.org/program/ruby-sales-where-does-it-hurt/8931>. Sarah Gant, the clerk of the Permanent Board, also reported that Marty Grundy will be the Bible Half Hour Speaker. Check the NEYM website for updates on the Gathering.

A Community of Thanks

Worcester Interfaith presented *A Community of Thanks*, an interfaith Thanksgiving celebration, on Tuesday evening, November 22 at Belmont Street African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. It was truly interfaith, organized by Rabbi Aviva Fellman of Beth Israel Synagogue, the various segments of the service were led by clergy of Roman Catholic, various Protestant, Jewish, and Muslim traditions and one Quaker elder (in the chronological sense of that word.) Hymns, *America the Beautiful*, *Simple Gifts*, *Hiney Ma Tov* (in Hebrew) *Let there be Peace on Earth*, and a musical offering by a quartet of women from the African American praise tradition, all accompanied by a rock trio, filling in among the Call to Worship, Litany of Joy and Humility, Thanksgiving Prayer, Sermon (by Sarah Stewart of First Unitarian Church), Shouts of Thanksgiving—all the clergy leading a rousing responsive paraphrase of Psalm 148—and Readings from Shared Scripture (a psalm, Isaiah, Chief John Yellow Lark, and Thomas Merton) were on the printed order of service. The final blessing was given in English, Hebrew, Arabic, Spanish, French German and a West African language:

“May the Lord bless you and keep you; may the Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace.”
Added at the last minute by Rabbi Aviva was a reading of the 1790 letter from President George Washington to the Jewish Community at Newport, Rhode Island. In her frantic efforts to fit it in, Aviva tapped that elderly Quaker (seen above right) to read it after joining in with the clergy leading the Shouts of Thanksgiving. He was happy to be able to bring to the celebration the noble words:

“The Citizens of the United States of America have a right to applaud themselves for having given to mankind examples of an enlarged and liberal policy: a policy worthy of imitation. All possess alike liberty of conscience and immunities of citizenship. It is now no more that toleration is spoken of, as if it was by the indulgence of one class of people, that another enjoyed the exercise of their inherent natural rights. For happily the Government of the United States, which gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance, requires only that they who live under its protection should demean themselves as good citizens, in giving it on all occasions their effectual support.

- -Clarence Burley



From AFSC: Centennial in 2017

Dear Friend,

Have you heard that 2017 is the American Friends Service Committee's 100th anniversary? Here are 8 ways for individuals and congregations to celebrate 100 years of peace and justice work with us:

1. Host the traveling exhibit about AFSC's values and current work at a Yearly Meeting annual gathering or in a monthly meeting—follow this link to reserve dates and to find out more information.
2. Use our first day school curriculum to tell the story of AFSC's history and current work.
3. Visit peaceworks.afsc.org to read stories from donors, volunteer, staff members, and program participants about their time with AFSC. Then, share your own AFSC story on the website.
4. Pick up the April 2017 edition of Friends Journal, featuring AFSC's Centennial.
5. Attend Friends General Conference's Annual Gathering in 2017, featuring a plenary address and workshops about AFSC.
6. Plan a trip to visit the “Wage Peace” museum exhibit about AFSC as it moves around the country, 2017-2019.
7. Attend the AFSC Centennial summit on April 20-23, 2017 in Philadelphia. (Registration opening soon)
8. Donate to the Courageous Acts campaign in honor of the Centennial and AFSC's continued work.

Visit afsc.org/100 for the latest information and starcafe.org/service/centennial for more resources.

Monthly Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business

Date: December 11, 2016

Present: Daron Barnard, Katharine Barnard, Mary Bennett, Tom Brenner, Sheila Brenner, Clarence Burley, Mary Chenaille, Jane Cutting, Paul Gallagher, Tyler Green, Whitney Mikkelson, Fred Mikkelson, Karen Sargent, Jessica Seem, Matthew Shorten, Mark Sullivan
Clerking: Daron Barnard

The meeting opened with silent worship and reading from NEYM Faith and Practice, Query 12: Peace and Reconciliation.

Items for consideration:

1. Michael Marcy, Director of Programming for Charter TV 3, visited to convey a gracious apology for the Halloween story on the Leicester cemetery. He communicated that the YouTube video has been taken down, and the ways in which they will change business going forwards. He also offered future news opportunities for the Worcester Friends who may wish to do an educational piece on Quakers, or informational segment on our outreach work. Daron will write a letter to Mr Marcy thanking him for his responsiveness and stating that we would like to take advantage of their offer of news coverage. At their next meeting, PSCO will consider how to use the news spot; those who are interested can contact Karen Sargent.
2. Scheduling for January.
 - Jan 1: New Years Day, no committee meetings
 - Jan 8: Spiritual Life and Practical Committees meet
 - Jan 15: Annual and Monthly Business Meeting
 - Jan 22: PSCO Committee meets
 - Jan 29: Before-Meeting discussion as proposed by Spiritual Life Committee on climate change and our response, as a continuation to the discussion at the Meeting's Retreat (November 5).
3. First Day School update. A sleepover was held last night for the Young Friends, which included fun community building, cooking a shared meal for residents of the Friendly House Shelter, painting and organizing the First Day School room, and baking and organizing the Annual Cookie Swap.
4. Planning for Annual Meeting to be held in January. Committees are requested to

provide budget estimates to Mark with as much advance notice as possible. It is noted that several updates to the physical building are being considered, including windows and ceiling fans; further discussion about making these changes environmentally responsible, and how to fund "green" projects, will be important. Gifts and Leadings committee is working on a "slate" to present. Committees are asked to prepare annual reports of their work, ideally to be presented in writing at the time of the meeting.

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer reports income slightly behind though ACH is slightly ahead of expected. There were no unanticipated expenses this month. Because there have been no large expenditures on the building, we anticipate ending the year ahead of budget. There was no annual appeal letter this year, but we would like to ensure that it happens next year. Pros and cons of different timing was discussed, with decision that it will be best after the Annual Meeting and State of Society report so as to inform the process. As the annual appeal was historically a task of the Trustees, it will be referred to Practical Committee.

Committee Reports:

1. Practical. This month's meeting was dedicated to discussion of the budget, see above.
2. Spiritual Life. The committee considered our individual and our Meeting's roles in the current political and social climate. We are aware of balancing our interest and responsibility with the fact that we are a small congregation. This pertains also to how we care for each other, and support each other in our roles in the Meeting. Gifts and Leadings recognizes the maturity and commitment of our Young Friends and will talk with the older children about committee involvement.
3. PSCO.
 - A contribution was sent to the Standing Rock Legal Defense Fund.
 - The newsletter will start to include a regular column spotlighting different PSCO work by Meeting members.
 - The Young Friends would be terrific additions to PSCO. Elliot Walsh is already helping with the website design, and other Young Friends would like to plan a movie showing.

- The Meeting sponsored a table at the Human Rights Day breakfast yesterday, which was an opportunity for small-scale but valuable publicity and networking.
 - There will be no December meeting of the committee as it would have fallen on Christmas Day.
 - Holy Cross is considering being a “sanctuary campus” and Ellen Perry will keep us updated about the process. Additionally, PSCO members will bring the question to Worcester Interfaith about proposing Worcester as a “sanctuary city”.
 - Next Saturday, AFSC-SENE will be running “Bystander Training” to teach techniques for being an ally to a person being harassed. Those interested should contact Martha Yeager.
 - NEYM has created business cards for the Meeting. Feedback to Beth Collea.
 - PSCO would like to utilize the signboard in front of the Meeting to post a timely message such as “Quakers for Religious Freedom”. The Meeting approves, and PSCO will look into printing this.
3. Jobs Not Jails announces a rally in Boston on Tuesday 12/13/16; there is transportation from Worcester leaving from 5 King St at 8am that day. Noted there are more black men in jail today than there were enslaved in 1850, and that black women is the fastest growing inmate population.
 4. There is a planned action this coming Thursday 12/15/16 asking TD Bank to divest from the Dakota pipeline and making banking customers aware of their bank’s involvement in the project. This silent vigil will be held at the TD Bank on Park Ave at noon.
 5. Massachusetts Quaker Legislative Network has been organized by Mary Gilbert at Cambridge Friends Meeting. The network serves to facilitate our response as a group to issues at a state legislative level. They seek volunteers who are interested in being the point people to spread information legislation that might be of interest to Friends.
 6. Women’s March in Washington on January 21. There is bus transportation from Worcester. Also the Washington DC Friends Meeting has opened its floors as a sleeping space.

The meeting closed with silence.

Respectfully submitted,
Katharine Barnard

Announcements:

1. Cookie Swap will be held after Meeting today.
2. Bible Study next week (Dec 18), with a Christmas theme, led by Geoff Knowlton.

Living Faith Gathering The Living Faith Gathering at the Friends School of Portland was held on Saturday, November 5, 2016. An intergenerational worship, with the children in the center, opened the gathering. An opening prayer, some silence, a reading of Peaceful Piggy Learns Compassion, with the pictures being shown and more silence and messages about the book and compassion. We had a break and then went into small groups for worship sharing. There, we reflected on “Who is it hardest for you to show compassion to?” We had a long break for lunch with time for a walk or good conversations. In the afternoon, we went to workshops. Mine was called, “Answering the Call...” where we talked about who might be “knocking on the door” to give a leading and, if we are to answer, what we might need to evict, and what might get a new lease in our spiritual and practical lives. There was a chance to reconnect to each other after the workshop. Some left to go home, others stayed for supper, some stayed for discussion after supper. The Spring 2017 Living Faith gathering is scheduled for **April 8, 2017** at the Moses Brown School in Providence, RI. The Brown School facility can accommodate 200 Friends and NEYM expects it to be sold out (as was the Portland Gathering). Watch the NEYM website for registration details.

- - **Karen Sargent**

More Quaker Action for Social Justice

Worcester Friends **Clarence Burley, Karen Sargent, Mary Chenaille** and **Jane Cutting** tended to a WFM table at the City of Worcester Human Rights Fair at the YWCA, on December 10 after their annual Award Breakfast.



Whitney and JoAnna Mikkelsen and **Sheila** and **Marrie Brenner** (right) joined fellow Worcester protesters in a silent demonstration in front of TD Bank on Park Avenue. Participants at the demonstration handed out pamphlets asking TD to divest its holdings in the Dakota Access Pipeline and other fossil fuel projects and asking the bank's patrons to consider closing their accounts until divestiture happens.

Abridged from Telegram & Gazette, November 16, 2016,
[Words in brackets added by the abridger, Clarence Burley]

Pipeline protesters rally at bank.

Worcester – “Water is life,” read a sign held by protesters in a driving rain outside Bank of America on Tuesday afternoon. Activists are targeting banks that are investors in the proposed Dakota Access oil pipe line, which Native Americans and environmentalists seek to stop from crossing tribal lands in North Dakota. The Standing Rock Sioux believe the pipeline, which will skirt the tribe’s reservation, threatens their drinking water and cultural sites.

Protester [and Quaker] **Matt Shorten** of Barre said, “I came to support the protest because the pipeline should be stopped or at least rerouted away from Native American Land and the Missouri River. Across the country, across the world, overwhelmingly everyone I talk to is opposed to the pipeline,” said Mr. Shorten, retired teacher in the Quabbin Regional schools who said he will cancel his Bank of America credit card.

A Bank of America spokeswoman, Kelly Sapp, stated, “We are not involved in the project.”

Opponents of the pipeline project say Bank of America has committed financial resources to the parent company of pipeline developer Dakota LLC. [Energy Transfer Partners]

SURJ, Showing Up for Racial Justice, is a national network of groups and individuals organizing White people for racial justice. Through community organizing, mobilizing, and education, SURJ moves White people to act as part of a multi-racial majority for justice with passion and accountability. SURJ works to connect people across the country while supporting and collaborating with local and national racial justice organizing efforts. SURJ provides a space to build relationships, skills and political analysis to act for change. Join Worcester SURJ for its 5th public meeting. Guest speaker Julius Jones from Black Lives Matter Worcester will be leading part 1 of a two part educational series (part 2 on Jan 18 - details coming soon.) Join the movement at the Worcester YWCA, 1 Salem Square, on **Wednesday, 12/21/16** from 6:30 pm to 8 pm.

Did You Know?



Young Friends recently gathered on a chilly morning in November to rake up leaves around the Meetinghouse. In December, the YF's cooked and shared a meal with residents at Friendly House Shelter before returning to the Meetinghouse to bake cookies for the annual swap and enjoy a sleepover.



Stop by to see **Sandy Kocher's** artwork at Express Yourself Coffeehouse at 2 Richmond Ave. in Worcester. The exhibit opened on 12/15/16.

Water

BY RALPH WALDO EMERSON

The water understands
Civilization well;
It wets my foot, but prettily,
It chills my life, but wittily,
It is not disconcerted,
It is not broken-hearted:
Well used, it decketh joy,
Adorneth, doubleth joy:
Ill used, it will destroy,
In perfect time and measure
With a face of golden pleasure
Elegantly destroy.

Phil Stone and **Katie Green** are happily acclimating to life in Dunedin, Florida. We miss them but wish them the best and look forward to their return in the Spring.



Do not be afraid, for
behold, I bring you good
tidings of great joy which
will be to all people.

Gospel of St. Luke, Ch.2

"If you're walking down the right path and you're willing to keep walking, eventually you'll make progress" - Barack Obama

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

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



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 Karen Sargent	-----	Fourth Saturday, 9:30 AM
Mid-week Meeting for Worship, convener Aaron Sakulich	-----	Wednesdays, 7 PM
Clerk of Worcester Friends Meeting	-----	Daron Barnard
Recording Clerk	-----	Katherine Barnard
Corresponding Clerk	-----	Clarence Burley
First Day School	-----	Katie Green, Katherine Barnard
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.