



Middlebury Friends Meeting

October/
November
2021

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Minutes of Sept 19, 2021

Minutes of Oct 17, 2021

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NOVEMBER 2021

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QUAKER CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Every First Day (Sunday)	9 - 9:45 AM 10 AM	First Day School Meeting for Worship at Havurah and Zoom If you need the Zoom link, con- tact Ed at edmund.m.harris@gmail.com
Fri, Sept 24		Community Supper
Mon, Sept 27		Men's Group
Sun, Oct 17	8:30 AM	Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business, in hybrid format
Sun, Oct 24		Friendly Forum, at Rise of Meeting, on Sacred Water
Mon, Oct 25	7 PM	Men's Group at Rosenbergs' and hybrid
Thurs, Oct 28	7 PM	Quaker Coffee House with Annie Stratton via Zoom
Mon, Nov 8	4 PM	Earthcare Committee, via Zoom
Sun, Nov 21	8:30 AM	Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business
Mon, Nov 22	7 PM	Men's Group
Sun, Nov 28	11:30 AM	Friendly Forum: "The Art of Hospitality" at Rise of Meeting
Mon, Dec 14	4 PM	Earthcare Committee via Zoom

NEWS OF QUAKERLY INTEREST

Collected by Lucy McKeon
lucym@shoreham.net



From WENDY GOODWIN: I've expanded my singing repertoire by joining the Barn Opera chorus! We performed La Traviata for 2 nights and I was able to remember and sing most of the words - lots of memorizing in Italian!

What a treat to sing with professional opera singers! And I got to wear a cocktail dress that has been in the closet since moving to Vermont!

We will perform Amahl and the Night Visitors again this year December 17 and 18 at the Salisbury church so save the dates!

—Lucy

Middlebury Friends Meeting

Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business

19 September, 2021

Zoom and in person

Clerking: Ruah Swennerfelt

Recording Clerk: Grace Seale

Present were Ruah Swennerfelt, Joe Garren, Jean Rosenberg, Grace McGrath, Brud Leedom, Douglas Way, Karen Way, Louis Cox, Karen Nawn-Fahey, Tom Baskett, Spence Putnam, Molly Anderson, Fran Putnam, John Cook, Don Peabody, Lianna Tennial, and Grace Seale.

21:09:01 Opening Worship After a time of silence, Ruah Swennerfelt read a quote from Leah Penniman of Soul Fire Farm and author of “Farming While Black”:

“We know there is no going back to ‘normal’. The path forward demands that we take our rightful places as the younger siblings in creation, deferring to the oceans, forests, and mountains as our teachers.”

21:09:02 Agenda review The agenda was reviewed.

21:09:03 Review of Minutes Minutes from the July Meeting for Business were reviewed and accepted.

It was suggested and agreed that the Clerk will include minutes of the most recent Meeting for Business when the agenda for the next meeting is sent to the listserv.

21:09:04 Co-clerks report

~The co-clerks have written a letter to Swarthmore Monthly Meeting on behalf of Shulamith Clearbridge, recommending her to sojourn with them.

~The co-clerks have written a recommendation letter for Shulamith to be Friend in Residence to Pendle Hill. After it’s sending she has postponed that decision.

~We are reminded that, aside from Pastoral Care, all committees are open to any Friend who is interested in participating.

21:09:05 Hybrid Committee report Grace McGrath reports on the variety of factors needed for the success of hybrid Meetings, with the desire to accommodate those who worship both in person and online. Assuring inclusion of all is critical to the success of this combination.

She has outlined the three tasks necessary for hybrid gatherings:

1] A Greeter at Havurah House: setting up chairs with attention to maximizing sense of community for both groups, greeting those who arrive, and opening / closing the Meeting,

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2] In-person IT, who turns the computer and camera on, adjust volume and confirms functioning. Ed Harris has sent very simple directions to help guide this task. It is emphasized that this does not require particular facility with computers,

3] An at-home Zoom host, who also sends out the invitation.

Almost all Friends could do any of these roles and are welcome to sign up. There is help readily available for any of these tasks from those who have already done each one.

Several opportunities for learning as we go forward have presented themselves in this process.

They include:

1] The Zoom invitation is date-specific and the current one must be used for the system to work.

2] Participants speaking on Zoom have seemed to have booming voices despite attempts to adjust the volume at Havurah House. It is suggested that lowering the volume on personal computers will not only improve this, but also reduce audio feedback.

3] Those participating in-person are requested to speak up, in order to be heard by those on Zoom.

We are reminded to exercise patience and be gentle with our expectations of one another, as not everyone participates or serves in the same ways.

Those gathered expressed once again tremendous appreciation for all the work this committee has done to allow us to worship together. We are grateful.

21:09:05 Treasurer's and Finance committee reports ~From Karen Nawn-Fahey:

All statements in this report are as of September 19, 2021. From July 19 through September 19, 2021 the Meeting had member donations of \$1942. During this interval the Meeting expenditures totaled \$923.44, including \$266.66 for Children's Program Coordinator, \$650.40 for hybrid meeting equipment, and \$6,38 for additional greeter key and tags.

Current balance of Vision for Vermont Funds: \$324.85

Current balance of Rachel Carey Harper Funds: \$0

When these checks clear, the balance in the checking account will be \$1,624.19.

This restated balance is based on adjustment: it includes donations after January 15 that should have been credited to prior year, and were not credited at all in balance of the Treasurer's Excel spreadsheet. These funds are under discussion with the Finance Committee.

As of 1 October Laura Asemily assumes the role of treasurer. Karen has volunteered to serve as resource for her during this time of transition.

Karen's dedication, good humor, and long service as treasurer are deeply appreciated.

cont.

~From Spence Putnam for the Finance committee

After discussions with the Treasurer and with consideration of our current circumstances the committee reports:

1] Reserve Fund

The committee recommends keeping \$8000, ½ of the yearly budget, on hand as a reserve fund. Given the current cash balance this means we have ~\$7000 surplus, with recognition to the normal fluctuations through a year in this balance. After discussion, there is concurrence on this action.

2] Rachel Carey Harper Fund

The fund is now depleted after expenditures of \$200 toward tech equipment for hybrid meetings and \$320 for solar panels at the Clemmons Family Farm. The Finance committee recommends immediately setting up a fund, by this or another name, with \$5000 to continue the tradition of being able to respond promptly to unbudgeted / unexpected expenses. If this recommendation is adopted an oversight committee will be needed for the fund.

The original guidelines of the Rachel Carey Harper Fund were discussed, and support expressed for leaving the name as is.

Particular appreciation was expressed for the great care and conscientious use of the original sum of \$2000. Further discussion and decisions are pending.

3] Friends International Bilingual Center {FIBC}

We are grateful for our ongoing personal connection with our Bolivian F/friend Emma Mamani Condori, and her commitment to ministry especially in these times of COVID.

The committee recommends adding FIBC as an annual benevolence, at an amount to be discussed during the budgeting process. Friends are encouraged to make designated donations to FIBC.

Any further current donations to the Bolivian Friends are requested promptly; a check will be issued 1 October.

4] Woolman Hill

The committee confirmed the previously-approved \$1000 contribution to Woolman Hill's capital campaign, divided evenly between the current fiscal year and FY 2022. The co-clerks will write a letter accompanying the first of these checks explaining our intentions.

It was suggested that consideration be given to adding a regular benevolence for Woolman Hill in future budgeting.

21:09:06 **Worship and Study** The committee continues to meet.

A weekly series “Elements of Quakerism” is to be offered by Phil Fitz of Northampton Friends Meeting via Zoom in January; details to follow by email.

The present schedule includes gatherings for

~26 September, Friendly Forum, at Rise of Meeting

~24 October Earthcare, Friendly Forum, at Rise of Meeting, on Sacred Water

~28 October, evening, Coffeehouse gathering

~24 November, Skills of Hosting Friendly Forum, at Rise of Meeting

There was discussion of the committee considering creation of a protocol addressing when or if in-person gathering might cease, either on a one-time or ongoing basis. Such situations might include weather, or COVID, or other yet unforeseen circumstances.

21:09:07 Fellowship committee In-person greeters and tech host, as well as a Zoom host are needed for each Sunday gathering. Signing up for any of these is via Google Docs, information about which has been sent from Grace McGrath. Should help be needed with signing up, Friends may telephone her.

21:09:08 Pastoral Care committee The committee remains quite busy including with outreach, clearness committees, care for those in need.

21:09:09 Nominating committee Tom Baskett reports the welcome news that Maxine Fidler has volunteered to assume the role of producing the newsletter. Win Colwell will help her with this transition through the first of January.

There was discussion and agreement. The co-clerks will communicate with her.

21:09:10 Called Committee on Urgent Call to Loving Action for Earth and her Inhabitants This group continues to meet, and is seeking to discern which actions Spirit is calling us to do that will have the greatest impact.

21:09:11 Earthcare committee Members of our committee, in coordination with the Fellowship Committee, attended an event at the Maritime Museum in conjunction with our work on water and the watershed project. A number of people from Middlebury Friends Meeting also attended the Sacred Water Event in Shelburne on September 11th, sponsored by Vermont Interfaith Power and Light (VIPL). The committee will continue to explore activities or events in the coming year focused on the health of our watershed. More details on our plans will be shared at our Friendly Forum scheduled for Sunday, October 24th.

Ruah, as liaison between VIPL and MFM, will keep the committee informed about an upcoming VIPL Legislative Day after the legislature reconvenes in January. We will continue to follow potential legislation related to water quality including harmful pesticides and herbicides. .

A Friendly Forum “Sacred Water” is scheduled for the 24th of October.

21:09:12 Community Supper Karen Nawn-Fahey reports that the program is feeding approximately 250 people on a regular basis, about 50-80 of them are ‘walk-up’ participants. Because of continued restrictions related to COVID19 the program cannot yet, unfortunately, be done in-person as in the past. Our budgeted contribution of \$500 was discussed and will be sent.

21:09:13 Closing After a time of quiet, gratitude was expressed for all who serve Middlebury Friends Meeting in the myriad ways they do.

Middlebury Friends Meeting Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business

17 October, 2021
Zoom and in person

Clerking: Joe Garren

Recording Clerk: Grace Seale

Present were Joe Garren, Ruah Swennerfelt, Karen Way, Grace McGrath,, Laura Asermily, Jean Rosenberg, Douglas Way, Molly Anderson, John Cook, Don Peabody, Lianna Tennal, Fran Putnam, Spence Putnam, and Grace Seale.

21:10:01 Opening Worship Following a time of silence, Joe Garren read a passage from “The Contemplative Heart” by James Finley.

21:10:02 Agenda review The agenda was circulated and reviewed.

21:10:03 Review of Minutes The minutes of 19 September Meeting for Business were reviewed and approved.

21:10:04 Co-clerks report Ruah Swennerfelt reported for the clerks.

1] “Passage of the Month”

Ruah shared from a draft chapter on Ministry and Counsel by the Yearly Meeting Faith and Practice Revision Committee, and mentions that for our Monthly Meeting this is applicable to the Pastoral Care as well as Worship and Study committees, and to Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business.

“Friends affirm the vital experience of a Spirit which illumines our lives, an Inward Guide whose nature is made manifest in our lives when we heed its promptings. We understand the Spirit to be invitational, to be challenging, to be inclusive, and to call us into community. In attending to this Guide, Ministry and Counsel members learn to be alert to the ways in which the community may need to be renewed, disciplined, refreshed, or enlivened, the authority of Ministry and Counsel lies in its ability to discern and articulate God’s invitation into a Spirit-guided life.”

2] The hybrid Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business is well-attended. There have been various challenges for committee clerks as well as the co-clerks, attenders in general as well as for the Tech committee. In recent months these evolu-

ing challenges have been met with persistence and creativity.

Deep appreciation to all for patience and good-humor in this process.

21:10:05 Treasurer's and Finance Committee Reports Laura Asermily reports:

"All statements in this report are as of Oct 17, 2021. From Sept 19 through Oct 17, 2021 the Meeting had member donations of \$700. From Sept 19 through Oct 17, 2021 the Meeting expenditures totaled \$3,448.33 including \$133.33 for Children's Program Coordinator, \$500 for Woolman Hill, \$500 for Community Supper, \$62.50 for NWQM, \$752.50 for Havurah, \$800 for NEYM, \$500 for Bolivia Friends, \$150 for Quaker Conference scholarship.

When these checks clear the account balance will be \$13,952.81.

Current balance of Vision for Vermont Funds: \$324.85

Current balance of Rachel Carey Harper Funds: \$5,000."

Laura expressed gratitude for help and kindness as she transitioned to this new role.

Fran Putnam will check with the committee on Vision for Vermont funds regarding how these monies might be directed and report at the next Meeting for Business.

From Spence Putnam for the Finance Committee:

The committee will soon begin considerations for the 2022 budget, which is finalized at the January Meeting for Business. They invite suggestions for new benevolences, or changes in those already budgeted.

21:10:06 Report of the Call to Urgent Loving Action Committee

1] Priscilla Baker submitted the following report:

As committee members we continue to educate ourselves so our understanding of the scope and nuance of issues regarding environment and climate justice are better understood. This will help ground our actions in both Spirit and knowledge.

The discussion has focused on possible actions to present to MFM, which is to learn about, plan for and put into place pollinator environments and other means of backyard biodiversity. The committee will use the winter months to learn about pollinator gardens and other forms of protecting and nurturing flora and fauna species in spaces ranging from very small ~as on porches and steps~ to quite large. A list of local resources has been started, to which all are invited to add.

This is a first action, with more to follow.

We are reminded of our desire, amid the seriousness of the climate crisis, that we desire to bring Light and joy in our actions.

Additional committee news:

2] The Bristol Solar Project has broken ground and construction is progressing.

3] Donations for the Clemmons Family Farm solar panels were more generous than originally estimated, and thirteen panels were funded.

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21:10:07 Worship and Study, and Fellowship Committees

1] NEYM has asked Monthly Meetings to review the next draft chapter on Ministry and Counsel for the new Faith and Practice. Worship and Study suggests a Faith and Practice Revision Review committee be established, with which Friends concur. This temporary committee would function for only a few months, given a late winter deadline for changes. Interested Friends are invited to talk to a member of either committee.

2] The committees have discussed practices of other worship groups, local and elsewhere, regarding COVID-19 safety. There has been careful and intentional consideration of balancing needs for in-person worship with attention to safety regarding infection risks, as opening windows becomes less possible in colder weather. Friends deeply miss singing together and the desire to gather with music was explored. Discussion followed about in-person and Zoom gatherings, and the many factors that must be considered in decisions about how to gather for worship. It was again emphasized that not all in our Meeting have or use computers or the internet.

A Called Meeting for discernment on issues regarding COVID protocols will be held in the next week.

3] Fourteen Friends have signed up for the course to be offered by Phil Fitz, of Northampton Meeting (described in September minutes). He is willing to offer not only the original daytime gathering but also an evening option if there is interest.

21:10:08 Tech committee This group is working in tandem with **Worship and Study** and the **Fellowship** committees, with the anticipation of using a hybrid gathering format indefinitely. The addition of a microphone is an improvement for those participating via Zoom.

Sincere ongoing gratitude to all who have worked to implement this format, and to seek solutions for the multiple unanticipated challenges encountered.

We are reminded of the need for abundant generosity of attitude toward those with variable levels of skill and comfort with technology.

21:10:09 Earthcare Committee Ruah Swennerfelt reminds us of the Friendly Forum on the 24th for increasing our awareness about Sacred Water.

This committee continues to coordinate with the **Call to Urgent Action Committee**.

This committee invites Friends to meetings on the second Mondays at 4pm via Zoom.

21:10:09 Pastoral Care This committee remains busy.

While their work is not readily visible, their care and attention benefit our Meeting in large and small ways, all the time.

21:10:10 Library Committee The librarian Becky Holmes and committee member Jean Rosenberg have written a guideline for acquisition and de-acquisition of library materials.

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Items to be retained are classics and classics-to-be, biographies and Quaker history, Pendle Hill pamphlets and Friends Journal, children's and First Day School books, books authored by MFM Friends, and a local social services directory.

Owing to space limitations some books were chosen for de-acquisition and were offered to Friends. A \$4 donation for books was received; the committee will add this to their budget. Remaining books will be donated to second-hand bookstores.

Pendle Hill pamphlets are now displayed on a new rack, which we expect will make this resource more easily accessible.

Some shelf space will be added to the library, in the small niche in the children's room, with permission from Havurah Board president. This construction will result in a modest expenditure, with which Friends concur.

The committee is developing a LibraryThing account, which provides online cataloging and book review space. Middlebury Friends will thus be able to see and search the books in our library and provide reviews.

21:10:11 Closing worship

After a time of silence our gathering concluded.

MIDDLEBURY FRIENDS MEETING		
Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)		Editor: Win Colwell
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Co-Clerks	Recording Clerk	Treasurer
Joe Garren (610) 324-8185 Ruah Swennerfelt (802) 922-2259	Jan Grace Seale mrs.seale@gmail.com	Laura Asermily PO Box 1026 Middlebury, VT 05753
Pastoral Care Committee		
Caring for one another in a loving community is an important part of our life as a Meeting. Call any member of Pastoral Care to share a concern or need.		
Wendy Goodwin (385-1900) Norm Tjossem (388-0338)	Brud Leedom (558-1005) Grace McGrath (388-6576)	Debbie Ramsdell (453-2027) Meg Langworthy (877-3217)
We welcome your submissions! — winslow.colwell@gmail.com News of Quakerly Interest — lucym@shoreham.net		

MIDDLEBURY FRIENDS MEETING

PO Box 1026
Middlebury, VT 05753

Meeting for Worship 10 AM every First Day via Zoom

www.middleburyquakers.org

Please send newsletter submissions to the address above or to
winslow.colwell@gmail.com