

Middlebury Friends Meeting

March
2012



MARCH 2012

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

QUAKER CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Every Saturday 10:30 AM Vigil for Peace on the Triangle Green, downtown Middlebury. Until 11 AM.
- Sun. March 4 8:30 AM Friendly Forum: Beyond Judgmentalism with Ann Barker and Tom Baskett
- Sat/Sun, March 3 & 4 Quarterly Meeting at Monadnock Monthly Meeting Jaffrey, NH
- Wed. March 7 7:30 PM Men's group at Chris Stackhouse, 388-9224
- Fri. March 9 3:00 PM Pastoral Care Committee
- Sun. March 11 8:30 AM Worship & Study Committee at Havurah House
- Mon. March 12 4:00 PM Committee on Outreach & Social Action at Putnam's, 388-1644
- Sun. March 18 8:30 AM Monthly Meeting for Business
- Sun. April 22 12-4 PM Earth Day at Middlebury Natural Foods Coop
- Fri. May 25 2-7:30 PM Community Supper preparation and hosting
- TBA Potluck hosted by Middlebury College worship group

“Courage is the most important of all the virtues,
because without courage you can’t practice any other
virtue consistently. You can practice any virtue erratically,
but nothing consistently without courage.”

— MAYA ANGELOU

Middlebury Friends Meeting Monthly Meeting for Business

19 February, 2012

Clerks: Cheryl Mitchell

Recording Clerk: Priscilla Baker

Present were Laura Asermily, Win Colwell, Tom Dickinson, Fran Putnam, Spence Putnam, and Chris Stackhouse.

12.2.01 Minutes for 15 January 2012: Accepted as printed in the newsletter.

12.2.02 Treasurer’s Report (Laura Asermily): “During the month of January 2012 the Meeting had income of \$3090. Of this \$990 was from member contributions. The member income for the comparable period last year was \$750. The Meeting received funds of \$2100 to hold for the Addison County Farm Worker Coalition until a new financial agent is found for this fund.

“Expenditures during January totaled \$1505.50. The Meeting paid its quarterly rent (\$500), NEYM donation (\$499), and NWQM donation (\$125). It reimbursed \$41.50 for library materials and paid \$340 in childcare expenses. This included childcare for State of the Meeting (\$60), Meeting for Worship childcare (\$120) and Children’s Program Coordinator (\$160).

“The reconciled bank balance at the end of January was \$4981.91. Of this, \$2881.41 is for Meeting and the balance of \$2100 will be carried over each month until a new financial agent is found (for the Addison County Farm Worker Coalition).”

FOLLOW-UP:

1. The *Addison Independent* will run its annual Addison County Worship Directory insert in April. After editing the text of last year’s MFM ad, it was approved to include and pay \$160 for the MFM ad in this year’s edition.

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2. It was agreed to change our fiscal year from July-June to the calendar year. There will be a transitional period of 6 months at the end of this year before starting this new fiscal year. This spring, the Finance Committee will prepare a 6 month budget covering July – December 2012. In the fall, they will prepare an annual budget for 2013.

12.2.03 Worship and Study Committee (W & S) (notes from Rebecca Holmes; edited for these minutes by the recording clerk)

1. After Words: We propose initiating an opportunity for Friends to join in a small circle after Worship to consider further words which were spoken in Meeting, to speak of things which didn't feel ready to be spoken in Meeting, and to give newcomers a chance to raise questions or other issues. W & S will introduce and facilitate after meeting circles.
2. First Day School: Win reported that the reorganization has been successful, that turnout is good if unpredictable, and that the curriculum, offered the 2nd and 4th Sunday, is working well.
3. Newcomers' Basket is now ready for use and will be placed on the Greeter table each Sunday.
4. Friendly Forum: March 5th, "Beyond Judgmentalism" will be facilitated by Tom Basket and Ann Barker.

FOLLOW UP: A draft of a Letter of Agreement between MFM and the Children's Program Coordinator was read, edited and approved. Co-clerk, Cheryl Mitchell, will sign the letter and send to Lianna Tennial for her signature.

12.2.04 Fellowship Committee (FC) (Fran Putnam)

1. Newly configured Friendly 8s groups for 2013 have begun to meet.
2. Middlebury College Friends have proposed hosting a potluck on campus in March or April. Some of the students will talk about their recent study abroad semesters. Date and location TBA.

12.2.05 Outreach and Social Action Committee (COSA) (notes from Tom Dickinson; edited for these minutes by the recording clerk):

1. A presentation by Quaker Earthcare Witness followed a potluck on February 17. We learned about their programs and how we can be involved. One possibility that came out of the discussion is to hold a "Awakening the Dreamer" workshop to focus on our spiritual connection to earth and its ecology.
2. The Middlebury Community Lunch and Supper programs are planning a "farm to plate" project to provide fresh produce this spring and summer. This was started last year and shows great potential. Several Middlebury Friends are involved and there will be opportunities for volunteers to help with field work, food preparation, preserving and other work. Over 18,000 meals were provided last year by the Lunch and Supper programs.

3. Friends Committee on National Legislation requests input from Monthly Meetings on priorities for lobbying and other actions for the 113th Congress. A survey of issues will be circulated for MFM Friends to consider. We will then rank among ourselves those issues most important to us. This will be sent to FCNL by their April 16, deadline.

2.2.06 **State of the Meeting report:** A draft was prepared and read. After a few edits to the report it was approved for publication in the next newsletter. It will be considered for final approval at next monthly meeting, after which it will be sent to quarterly and yearly meetings.

Monthly meeting closed after a moment of silence.

MIDDLEBURY FRIENDS MEETING STATE OF THE MEETING REPORT FOR 2011

Two dozen Friends gathered for two hours of worship sharing to reflect on the year, 2011. We identified areas of stability and growth as well as edges of discomfort, which inspire our desire to improve.

Spiritual Community and Worship: Friends expressed that MFM is a source of personal grounding, safety, peace and renewal. Many expressed gratitude for MFM and for our times of worship. Meetings for worship are usually deeply centered, whether totally silent or enriched by vocal ministry. A variety of topics have been explored in Friendly Forums providing vehicles to search within ourselves and as a spiritual community. When one Friend relinquished her long time practice of placing flowers in the middle of our worship circle other Friends responded to the invitation to provide something natural and simple. We note, with regret, that we did not provide active support to two worship groups under our care.

Children: This year saw a concerted effort to focus on the needs and well-being of our children. It was decided to create a part time position, Children's Program Coordinator. We dedicated funds and hired a coordinator to start January 2012. We recognize the unique challenges of families with young children to come to meeting on Sunday mornings; we are grateful to these families and their commitment to integrate their children into Quaker values, practices and community. We welcomed the birth of a new child.

Pastoral Care: We welcomed several newcomers over the year, tended to Friends who are facing challenges and provided support to Friends experiencing life transitions. When Friends ask one another, "How are you?" we are secure in knowing the asker is truly interested in our well-being.

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Fellowship: We have shared joyful events such as intergenerational meetings, potlucks and Friendly 8s potluck groups. There is a vibrant group of college students who join us for worship and social gatherings. Especially noted are the men's and women's groups, long time monthly gatherings that continue to provide support to those who attend.

Outreach and the wider Quaker community: We usually have representation at quarterly and yearly meetings. However, we struggle with balancing the need to participate in wider Quaker groups and the environmental impact of traveling distances in order to do so. We sent a Minute directly to Friends United Meeting concerning their denial to include gay men, lesbians and unmarried couples in positions of leadership.

We appreciate our various vehicles of communication and outreach. One Friend continues to create a beautiful monthly newsletter, as well as various information cards, pamphlets and nametags; our librarian keeps the library in good order and current with new books and pamphlets; our listserv is actively used by all of us to send out information, solicit help for practical needs, share poems and theological reflections and report on activities. Our representatives to other groups keep us informed through announcements and listserv, e.g., Interfaith Power and Light and the Middlebury Area Clergy Association. Within our local community we hosted 2 Friday night community suppers, providing 200 meals on each occasion.

We struggle with how much social action to undertake as a corporate body. While many Friends derive strength and support from MFM to carry out their individual leadings, we wonder if we should do more as a faith group. We are challenged to find ways to express our love beyond those who love us back.

Organization and Finances: Our committee structure, honed a few years ago, provides the oversight for all our activities. It enables more people to be involved and alleviates stress to the few Friends who used to carry the load. The change of meeting time for monthly meeting for business to earlier in the morning on the third Sunday has worked well for most Friends who regularly attend.

We have met for several years in the Fellowship Room of Havurah House. Given our desire to not own property we have found a good partnership and home in this space. However, we acknowledge some limitations. The need for sound abatement was addressed in 2011 and we now enjoy improved acoustics, especially during worship. MFM is in good financial health. Friends respond to appeals when needs arise. Recognizing growing needs within our local community and beyond, we decided to increase most of our annual benevolences. It is noted, however, that only a few households provide the largest share of financial support to MFM.

Future: Our reflections on the past year prompt us to identify areas in which we hope to improve in the year ahead.

1. We would like to connect with the two worship groups under our care as well as other meetings in our area.

2. Develop and expand the children's program with the new coordinator by maintaining a high level of involvement among all Friends.
3. Explore ways to improve the path of arrival into the worship space which is often slippery in the winter and congested inside the door.
4. Encourage broader financial participation.
5. Develop Friendly Forums on Quakerism.
6. Include reading Advices during the monthly reading of Queries.
7. Find ways to use the restlessness felt by some to create ways MFM can take action to address such issues as climate change, perhaps in collaboration with other faith groups.
8. Stay alert to sparks that may arise to lead us into corporate action.

MIDDLEBURY FRIENDS MEETING

Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

Editor: Winslow Colwell

Newsletter Mailing: Ted Colwell & Ruth Barenbaum

Co-Clerks

Cheryl Mitchell (545-2278)

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Laura Asermily

266 Washington St. Ext.

Middlebury, VT 05753

388-9478

Co-Treasurer

David Andrews

281 Washington St. Ext

Middlebury, VT 05753

388-4894

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.

Priscilla Baker (388-8024)

Sas Carey (388-1301)

Brud Leedom (623-7533)

Grace McGrath (388-6576)

Carrie Reed (388-0436)

We welcome your submissions! — win@wcolwell.com

MIDDLEBURY FRIENDS MEETING

PO Box 1026

Middlebury, VT 05753

Meeting for Worship 10 AM every First Day

Havarah House, 56 N. Pleasant St. (Rt.7), Middlebury

www.middleburyquakers.org

Please send newsletter submissions to the address above or to

win@wcolwell.com