

Middlebury Friends Meeting

December/
January
2008/09



DECEMBER 2008

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			

JANUARY 2009

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

*“Rosa sat so Martin could walk
Martin walked so Barack could run.”*

—OVERHEARD ON ELECTION NIGHT

QUAKER CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Every Saturday	10:30 AM	Vigil for Peace on the Triangle Green, downtown Middlebury. Until 11 AM.
Wed. Dec. 10	7:00 PM	Men’s Group at David Rosenberg’s (388-6453)
Sun. Dec. 14	9:45 AM	Singing before Worship
Mon. Dec. 15	7:00 PM	Women’s Group at Sas Carey’s (388-7684)
Sun. Dec. 21	10:00 AM	Holiday Intergenerational Meeting at Havurah House: worship sharing, singing, a play & vegetarian potluck
Thur. Dec. 25	4:00 PM	Christmas Day Meeting at South Starksboro Meeting House, singing & worship, bring a candle
Sun. Dec. 28	9:45 AM	Singing before Worship
Wed. Jan. 14	7:00 PM	Men’s Group at Tom Baskett’s (758-2055)
Sun. Jan. 18	11:30 AM	Monthly Meeting for Business
Sun. Jan. 25	3:00 PM	State of the Meeting discussion, followed by potluck at Manya & Tom Dickinson’s (388-2594)

Middlebury Friends Meeting

Monthly Meeting for Business

16 November, 2008

Clerk: Becky Stratton

Recording Clerk: Priscilla Baker

Present were Laura Asermily, Tom Baskett, Manya Dickinson, Tom Dickinson, Wendy Goodwin, Stewart Kirkaldy, Fran Putnam, Spence Putnam, and Jean Rosenberg

08.11.01 Minutes from 19 October 2008 were accepted as printed in the newsletter.

08.11.02 Treasurer's Monthly Report and Finance Committee Report (reported by Spence Putnam and Laura Assermily) "During the month of October, we had income of \$1045.00 and expenses totaling \$1,263.50 (\$500 for rent, \$500 to New England Yearly Meeting, \$125 for Northeast Quarterly Meeting, \$18.50 for Newsletter, and \$120.00 children's program). The checking account balance at the end of October was \$3,359.26, which includes \$700.00 in the Carry-over contingency fund. As of November 12th we had income of \$65 and expenditures of \$210 for the month, leaving us with a bank balance of \$3,214.26."

Friends are reminded that December is the month during which we pay our benevolences, in full. Donations are particularly welcomed at this time so we can send approved donations to all of those organizations and projects we support.

08.11.03 Worship and Study Committee (reported by Tom Baskett)

- A) The committee continues to read and discuss the Spiritual Life Surveys, noting the great diversity among responses. They will prepare a full report for MFM.
- B) The annual Holiday Meeting will be on December 21, at Havurah House. This is the first day of Hannukah and Winter Solstice as well as the Sunday before Christmas. We will gather at 10:00 AM, hold our intergenerational meeting, which will include a play by younger Friends, at 10:30, followed by singing and potluck. In respect for the dietary guidelines of Havurah, our potluck will be vegetarian, including eggs and dairy. Friends are asked to bring their own plates, silverware and serving utensils.
- C) Regular singing was discussed by the committee and then by MM. It was decided to try singing BEFORE meeting for worship on the second and fourth Sundays. This will begin in December, with singing at 9:45 AM on December 14 and 28. Priscilla Baker will organize. We will continue to use our new hymnals and other materials such as *Rise Up Singing*.

cont.

08.II.04 Fellowship Committee (reported by Wendy Goodwin)

- A) Potlucks: Plans were discussed for the upcoming potluck on Nov. 21. MM discussed the hope for future potlucks to include speakers on diverse topics. It was suggested that we might invite representatives from some of our benevolences to talk about the work they do, as well as consider other resources/speakers from within our meeting and larger community.
- B) Friendly 8's: All the newly configured groups have met at least once.
- C) Greeter Roster: Greeters are reminded to pass the clipboard around at the close of each meeting for worship and to encourage Friends to sign up to be greeter, provide hospitality and/or read a query.

08.II.05 Outreach and Social Action Committee (report sent by Karen Nawn-Fahey, delivered by Tom Dickinson, and edited by the recording clerk for these minutes).

“Our most recent meeting focused on the listserv and potential guidelines. We recognize that this kind of community communication vehicle is invaluable. We appreciate the opportunity for democratic fellowship. Also, we may want to consider links to other groups, for example, the Clergy Council Bulletin. We continue to discuss a “Back Porch” type of bulletin board communication in addition to the listserv. We urge everyone using the listserv to make use of the “subject line” to indicate the topic of the email. We hope to send a brief questionnaire out to the listserv community to assess strengths, improvements, and concerns that people may have. We will report back to the Meeting in the New Year.”

08.II.06 Facilities Committee (reported by Tom Dickinson) The committee is ready to distribute the Facilities Questionnaire which will be sent by listserv and hard copies will be available on the Greeter Table each Sunday. Friends are encouraged to use the questionnaire as a vehicle to express their thoughts and opinions about what kind of space is desirable and feasible for MFM.

08.II.07 Middlebury Interfaith Committee on Food and Fuel (reported by Jean Rosenberg) This community group is discussing the possibility of providing 4 community lunches/week (in addition to the well established Friday night dinners). Jean will find out the particulars and pass these along to the Outreach and Social Action Committee for possible action/involvement to be taken by MFM.

08.II.08 Death Penalty: Spence Putnam noted that a recent article in *The Burlington Free Press* stated that the majority of Vermonters are in favor of the death penalty. He suggested we consider a Friendly Forum on this topic and to encourage Friends to write letters to the editor.

Monthly Meeting closed with a few moments of silence.

MFM SPIRITUAL SURVEY, FALL 2008

There seems to be very substantial unity on what people value most from the meeting, and what nourishes their spiritual life.

1. Most important: Spiritual community, including worshipping together, with the Quaker meeting practices of silence, vocal ministry, silent waiting and opening in worship. Also the support for spiritual living and growth, and the collective caring, love, and acceptance. Also the fellowship that comes out of the spiritual community.
2. Specifically what enhances spiritual life: Many mentioned the Quaker practices of silent, unprogrammed, corporate meeting for worship, in a circle, with vocal ministry out of the silence. The Spiritual Discipline of weekly meeting for worship. Also Sharing our faith stories.

In addition, a number of other practices were mentioned by one or a few people:

The Fellowship and sharing in Friendly 8s, men's and women's groups, potlucks, and Friendly forums, Singing together, Opportunities to learn from others, Opportunities to care for others and to receive caring, Kids sharing with adults, the Library, and Connections to the larger Quaker world and the interfaith world.

3. There is also substantial agreement that many people would like to enhance meeting with more and regular opportunities to Share faith stories and spiritual practices. And other wishes mentioned by one or a few:
 - Outreach to increase the number of younger people and families
 - Education and discussion opportunities, including on Quakerism
 - Possibly prayer groups and spiritual nurture groups
 - Periodic explanations of vocal ministry, how it should arise out of the leading of the spirit, etc, (We also note that many people said they were nurtured by the vocal ministry)
 - Retreats
 - Possibly a Quaker information sheet, with references
 - Deeper grounding of worship, perhaps arising out of many of the above
 - Children to stay longer in meeting for worship
 - Meetings for business more grounded in worship
 - More conversations with kids
 - First Day school do more Quaker education (one term per year)
 - Support for couples

cont.

4. The Christian history of Quakerism is very important to a few and important as one component to others. One person said Christian language and imagery was not compatible, but it isn't clear if that means that person has a difficult time with it. One other said it is too restrictive and s/he must translate it, and most everybody else said it is good, and especially if not exclusivist. Many said the language and imagery is helpful along with that of other traditions.

Two people mentioned a concern that they might offend or get rejected if they speak in Christian terms.

Seven people said let's talk about this topic.

Most people mentioned other faith traditions that they have found valuable, and said that they find other people's speaking about other faiths valuable. The faith traditions mentioned included about all you can think of, including Buddhism, Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, Universalism, paganism, spiritualism, shamanism, Native American, Islam/Sufism, and Taoism.

One person said that the language and imagery from other traditions sometimes detracts or distracts.

5. 12 people said they would be interested in forums/book discussion/presentation on Quaker topics. 7 said maybe.
6. Other topics for discussion: Prayer and holding in the Light; Applying our understanding of religious concepts; Sharing stories of Quaker testimonies and practices; Sharing on Quaker history; Art in worship; Sharing our faith stories; Commitment in spirituality; the Distinguishing features of Quaker spirituality; Zen meditation; Biblical interpretation, Biblical economics; How Christianity speaks to our condition today; Faithfulness and spiritual accountability; Friends testimonies; Gifts of the Spirit; Clearness committees and leadings; vocal ministry.

I WAS HUNGRY, AND YOU FED ME...

The food shelves in Addison County are being heavily used, and they need both monetary contributions and non-perishable food donations. The money is needed for the fresh and refrigerated foods that are necessary for nutrition. Note that it is easy to buy an extra non-perishable item or two when you go to the market and leave it there in the bin for the food shelf; these are collected several times a week. It is also possible to bring fresh food directly to the food shelf, where they will store it in their refrigerators and give it away very quickly. There is a special need during school vacations, when children who depend on school lunches and breakfasts are doing without.

cont.

Here are non-perishable items that are always needed:

Soups, canned meats and fish, canned fruit and vegetables, cold cereal, juices, dried milk, crackers, rice and pastas, peanut butter, jelly, mayonnaise, flour and sugar, cooking oil, laundry and dish detergents, toilet paper, diapers, soap and shampoo, toothpaste...

News of Quakerly Interest

joanna@ottercreekyoga.com

"If you don't like the news, go out and make some of your own!" — Scoop Nisker

Happy 92nd Birthday Dear BURT KNOPP- Wow!

Extra! Extra! Read all about it- Friends in the news! The *Addison Independent* did a beautiful article on Wellspring - the Hospice singers. The article featured our own PRISCILLA BAKER, who founded the group of singers, as well as our own MARGIE BECKOFF- harpist extraordinaire.

Also recently featured in the *Independent* were LEWIS SUCHOMEL and BJORN COBURN, both of whom participated in a recent benefit for the H.O.P.E. food shelf at Otter Creek Yoga.

And yet *another* article featured MARY LANGWORTHY, TARAN HOPKINS, MARTIN GLAZER, WREN COLWELL, AND KAI and CLAIRE ARMSTRONG. The piece, about the Quaker children's Helping Hands Healing Hand Balm, let the world know that our product is for sale in three Middlebury locations (Foote Street Farmstand, Middlebury Natural Foods Co-op, and Otter Creek Yoga), and that our Meeting has already donated over \$900 to the H.O.P.E. food shelf from sales of our balm. If any of you need more balm for Christmas gifts, please see any of the kids at Meeting.

The Middlebury Community Choir, which includes MIMI LOVE-NICHOLSON, JEAN ROSENBERG, PRISCILLA BAKER, TANYA LEHMAN, and WENDY GOODWIN, gave a fabulous concert of Thanksgiving music at Mead Chapel—thank you beautiful singers!

LAUREL COBURN writes: Our news is our move from our house in Cornwall a few miles down the road to Whiting. We're now living in a three-generation household with my parents. We're enjoying this life—and a bonus is a significant cut in our carbon emissions. Our new phone number is (802) 623-6475 and our address is now 278 North Road, Whiting, VT 05778.

cont.

The Meeting notes with sadness the passing of JACKIE ZIEGLER. As PRISCILLA BAKER wrote: "Jackie was a Friend who moved to Middlebury 4 years ago from the Philadelphia area. Although she did not attend First Day worship, small groups worshipped with her in her home - for which she was deeply grateful. Jackie died this morning, in her home, surrounded by her son, Larry, daughter-in-law, Wanda, and granddaughter, Rosa. They have asked that MFM hold a memorial service for Jackie. We will let you know when this is to take place.

Please join me in holding the Ziegler family in Light and love."

Joanna Colwell

MIDDLEBURY FRIENDS MEETING

Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

Co-Clerks

Becky Stratton (388-2487)

Carrie Reed (388 0436)

Recording Clerk

Priscilla Baker

Treasurer

Laura Asermily

266 Washington St. Ext.

Middlebury, VT 05753

388-9478

Co-Treasurer

Spence Putnam

575 Morgan Horse Farm Rd

Weybridge, VT 05753

388-1644

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.

Ruth Barenbaum (388-2651)

John Beattie (352-4416)

Sas Carey (388-7684)

Meg Langworthy (877-3217)

Carrie Reed (388-0436)

Newsletter Editor Winslow Colwell (388-1961, win@wcolwell.com)

Newsletter Mailing Ted & Olive Colwell, Ruth Barenbaum

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