

Sixth Month

MIDCOAST MONTHLY MEETING
 OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS
 Damariscotta, Maine
NEWSLETTER

June 2009



Pray without ceasing.

-- 1 Thessalonians 5:17 (KJV)

Prayer is an act of love, words are not needed. Even if sickness distracts thoughts, all that is needed is the will to love.

-- St. Teresa of Avila, The Way of Perfection

June

Wednesday	June 3	4:30 p.m.	Peace Center Steering Committee
Thursday	June 4	5:30 p.m.	Ministry & Counsel Committee
Sunday	June 7	Rise of Meeting	Potluck Lunch followed by Work Hour
Sunday	June 21	Rise of Meeting	Monthly Meeting for Business

Upcoming

Sat.-Thurs.	August 1-6	*NEYM Sessions, Bryant U., Smithfield, RI
Fri.-Sun.	Sept. 11-13	Vassalboro Qtr Fall Gathering, Friends Camp, China, ME

*Look inside for more information regarding these items.

~Calendar events are held at the meetinghouse, unless otherwise noted.~

Sunday Meeting for Worship is held at the meetinghouse, 77 Belvedere Rd., Damariscotta, 10:00 a.m.
 Meetinghouse phone: 207-563-3757. Directions: Take US Route 1 to Damariscotta and turn onto Belvedere Rd.
 (left if coming from the south, right if coming from the north—Miles Home Health Care building on the corner).
 The meetinghouse is the second building on the right, .2 mile from the corner.

Moving? Changing your e-mail address? Don't forget to let us know. Please remember that when you receive the newsletter by e-mail, you save the Meeting money and you lighten our workload. To receive the newsletter by e-mail, kindly send a request to Diane Kirkman at diane_kirkman@hotmail.com. Thanks!

For newsletters, important links, & a current calendar, visit our website: www.midcoastfriendsmeeting.org.

Highlights

Monthly Meeting for Business–May 17, 2009

The proposed budget for 2009-2010 was presented. It is a decrease from the past. A pledge letter will soon be sent. We hope to approve a budget at the next meeting.

George Waldman and Bill Hallett, co-chairs of the new Grounds Committee, presented recommendations for care of the grounds. Work hours will coincide with monthly potlucks as in the past. George and Bill will convene a meeting of the current Meetinghouse & Grounds Committee to discuss the future of meetinghouse care, as separate from grounds care.

The ad hoc committee for memorial stones presented its proposal. It was discussed and will be on the June agenda for possible approval.

Ministry & Counsel will act soon on a State of Society Report for 2008.

The future of the Peace & Social Concerns Committee's relationship to the Peace Center Steering Committee is not yet clear. Brewster Grace and Carmen Lavertu will convene Friends actively concerned and bring a recommendation to the Meeting.

Teachers are not committed to have religious education classes during the summer. Instead Friends are asked to sign up to provide supervision of young people. We expect the new swing set to arrive soon.

The Hospitality Committee has agreed to be responsible for supplies for the meetinghouse for the remainder of the year.

The Meeting endorsed the Peace Center Steering Committee's plan to invite Richard Erstad of AFSC to speak here next fall on the subject of Cuba. Other possible plans include a four-week Earth Institute study group based on reading and an Alternatives to Violence Workshop in September.

Friends will please review the new draft chapter for the revised NEYM Faith & Practice available on the credenza.

The **next meeting for business will take place Sunday, June 21**, at the rise of meeting for worship. All are welcome. Please bring a bag lunch. The entire pending minutes of the May session are available at the Meeting website www.midcoastfriendsmeeting.org and on the bulletin board at the meetinghouse.

ADVICES: HOME AND FAMILY

Let your lives benefit from the power of friendship and the solace of solitude. Rejoice in the beauty of those friendships which grow in depth, understanding, and mutual respect.

Friends are advised to seek divine guidance when considering marriage and to enter marriage with a commitment to cherish each other for life. In marriage, treasure the joys of intimacy, share the sorrows of losses, and mediate differences with patience. Be ready to seek the counsel of your own parents or of other experienced persons as it is needed. Consider together the responsibilities of parenthood.



Let us trust in the Light and witness to it in our daily living. We and our families are children of God with a rich accessible record of God's dealings with humanity. In dress, in furnishings, in manners, in diet, and in entertainment, let us choose the simple, the wholesome, and the beautiful. Let us be cooperative and creative in family recreation so that it encourages mutual activity and sharing.

Let us dwell with thankfulness on the blessings and happiness that life has brought us. Friends are advised to try throughout life to discern the appropriate moment to relinquish responsibilities to others. Let us face with courage the approach of old age, both for ourselves and for those dear to us, realizing that even as our outward activity lessens, our seasoned thought and prayer may liberate love and power in others.

Friends are advised to make provision for the settlement of their affairs while in health so that others may not be burdened. Such provision may include maintaining an up-to-date will and discussing with family and doctors our wishes in the event of serious illness or death.

Dear Friends,

This letter is to let you know about some of the items of business that will be brought before us, God willing, for our worshipful discernment at **NEYM ANNUAL SESSIONS, AUGUST 1-6, 2009 AT BRYANT UNIVERSITY, SMITHFIELD, RI**. Please take these to your monthly and quarterly meetings, pray and talk about them. Several of these have been pending for a number of years. The principal items I am now expecting to come before us are:

1. Permanent Board's recommendations that the Yearly Meeting:
 - a. Adopt a proposed vision statement;
 - b. Approve a new Yearly Meeting organizational structure. This will include the new job descriptions of Yearly Meeting Secretary, Communications Director, and Junior Yearly Meeting/Junior High Yearly Meeting Coordinator. (All of our current staff support this recommendation.)
 - c. Authorize the incorporation of the Moses Brown School.
 - d. Spend time in prayer and discernment concerning NEYM's relationship with Friends United Meeting, in light of its personnel policy.
2. We will hear reports from quarterly meetings, as well as from the working party on sexual ethics and spirituality, on their work concerning same-gender marriage, following up on the Yearly Meeting-approved Minute on Commitment.

For fuller information and a complete set of background materials, go to the NEYM website, www.neym.org, or contact the NEYM Office for paper copies. In addition, there will be an open forum for discussion of the Moses Brown incorporation recommendation on Sunday, May 17, beginning at 6:30 p.m. at the Providence Friends Meetinghouse, 99 Morris Ave., Providence, RI. Please spread the word that all are invited.

I appreciate that this is a lot of material, particularly for a year when we have the theme of Living into Jubilee. The idea of Jubilee runs through the Hebrew Bible (see Leviticus 25) and is what Jesus preached in Luke 4:18-19. Jubilee is a giant Sabbath and Sabbath is about being with God. When Sessions Committee discerned this theme in the fall, the discussion was about clearing our individual and corporate lives of the busyness, the clutter of activities and things God either never asked us to include there or would like us to lay down.

How do we know what those things are? We have to stop and breathe and give ourselves enough time and space to hear the loving voice that calls us. It calls us to join in the right ordering of creation, beginning with the smallest details of our lives. This is a bottom-up reordering that begins with, and acts out of, stillness. We have to choose it. Jubilee calls us to a reordering of life through receiving God's love, to release the land from human burdens, release each other from debt and bondage.

How do we begin? I ask you to take these queries to your monthly and quarterly meetings, to your children, parents, partners and friends. Pray and talk about them. Sit and walk with them. Bring them with you to Sessions in August, where we will share and try to support each other as we listen together for how to "Live into Jubilee":

1. What is God asking me/us to let go of in order to make more room for the spirit in my life/our life together?
2. How can I/we ask for support to make time and space available to listen for answers and be faithful in following the direction that might arrive? How can I/we create ways to be accountable to making this question the central motivation for the decisions I/we make each moment?

This year may be a time of preparation for a fuller observance of Jubilee in 2010. While we labor with these queries, we may also clear a time for rest and restoration in 2010 by bringing the business items listed above to closure in 2009. For that, I need your help. Now is the time to consider these items of business, to ask questions and raise concerns, if any, which you can send to me at clerk@neym.org or 508-754-6760. I will do my best to get them answered in a timely manner so that we will be well prepared to discern deeply and efficiently when we gather in August. Thank you for your time and support.

Yours in service,

Linda Jenkins, presiding clerk

QUERIES

HOME AND FAMILY--Do you make your home a place of friendliness, refreshment, and peace, where God becomes more real to those who live there and to all who visit there? Is worship a daily part of your personal and family life? Do you recognize marriage as a sacred, loving, and permanent relationship requiring mutual consideration and adjustments? Should conflict or crisis threaten the stability of the home, are you open to seeking all necessary help, both from your meeting and from the larger community?

Breathe Free--As noted in the April business meeting, Joyce Young, who had been attending meeting for worship, decided she could no longer do so because of chemical fragrances in the meeting. Anne Spencer advises us that Dr. Young will be sending brochures to the Meeting about the health risks from using chemical fragrances. Anne adds information she gleaned from Dr. Young's brochure: "In an effort to educate ourselves on this issue, here are a few of the factors we should consider: Fragrances nowadays are almost entirely chemical and 95% of these chemicals are derived from petroleum. They are made to be very volatile and long lasting. There is little or no monitoring of their safety. The use of fragrances is widespread: in lotions, soaps, shampoos and other scented products for personal use; in laundry and cleaning products.... and the list goes on. We can't escape these fragrances which enter the body through the skin and the air we breathe."