

## Mid-Year Sessions, 4/17-19, Portland, ME

### A Call to Worship

*Linda Jenkins, New England Yearly Meeting (NEYM) Presiding Clerk*

**N**OW WE ARE. WE HAVE ONLY NOW, THIS MOMENT. And in this moment, you and I and all of the some 4000 Quakers in New England Yearly Meeting are being called to show up for the meeting for worship we approved in minute 52, *A Minute on Peace*, last August. That minute, coming forward through Salem Quarterly Meeting (Boston area) and the NEYM Peace & Social Concerns Committee, asks for a called meeting for worship to “address the concerns raised in the minute” related to last year’s theme of *War: God Help Us!* Specifically, minute 52 states:

We are mindful that Friends testimony on peace calls us “to root out the causes of war from our own lives and from the political and social structure about us.” We are urged to “seek, through God’s power and grace, to overcome in our own hearts the emotions that lie at the root of violence.” We seek, always, to live lives that testify to the presence of the divine Light in ourselves and every human being. We strive to overcome our own fears so that we can be centers of peace, a calming influence in an increasingly anxious world. We will remember what Jesus said: “Peace is my parting gift to you, my own peace, such as the world cannot give. Set your troubled hearts at rest, and banish your fears.”

After its approval but before planning began for this called meeting for worship, the Sessions Committee discerned the 2009 Summer Sessions theme, *Living into Jubilee*. Jubilee (see Leviticus 25, Luke 4:16-19) is a time of re-ordering outwardly and inwardly, in order for the land to be freed of human burdens, for those in bondage to be freed and for debts to be forgiven. In our language, this means right-care of the planet and embodiment of social justice, establishment of peace. This time of restoration is available by collectively and deliberately turning all aspects of our being to the one true source. That means first getting ourselves to that still place, in worship, where we can hear the voice of God. If our actions do not follow from that source, our attempts to remedy the concerns raised in minute 52 are bound to fail.

The stillness is where the April meeting for worship and our embrace of Jubilee meet—and where we are called to be. Can we gather and be still together long enough to hear that voice? Can we support each other to trust, without diverting ourselves one way or another, calling that source into the world even as it calls us? Can we join together to allow the light of love into the disordered parts of our hearts and lives, acknowledging for each other where we may be faithful, even while continuing to open to the light where it would love us into truth? I think we can and we will. Come and see.

The planning committee has been meeting, praying and trying to discern how to offer this time with enough structure to welcome and support us, while honoring our practices of open worship, to give space for the Spirit. The process is still unfolding, in part because we have been seeking the maximum participation throughout the Yearly Meeting and have been allowing time for input from monthly and quarterly meetings and individuals. We have been receiving a lot of that input and are excited about the energy and interest we have seen already.

We expect each of our worship times together will include centering queries, reflections, calls or prayers to help gather us. Some of these are posted on the NEYM website and are available in printed form upon request. These will likely continue to change, as we try to be open to the Spirit, which we pray is moving among us. I invite you to be part of this process of discernment, holding it in your heart and as led, sharing your insights with the planning committee. Most importantly, I hope you will come.



### Plans for Mid-Year Sessions, Called Meeting for Worship

*Ian Harrington, Mid-Year Sessions, Called Meeting for Worship Planning Committee Clerk*

**N**EYM’S MID-YEAR SESSIONS, CALLED MEETING FOR WORSHIP will be held in Portland, Maine at the Hotel Clarion, Friday evening, April 17, to Sunday lunch, April 19, 2009. The hotel is located conveniently next to the Portland Transportation Center (Amtrak and Concord Trailways service) and about 1/10 of a mile from Exit 5, off I-295, at 1230 Congress Street.

We plan to gather after 5pm for registration, opening wor-

ship, and the start of the children’s program on Friday evening. The plenary room at the hotel has a capacity of 300. Comfortable and movable chairs, microphones, and hearing-assistance devices will support the adults through several periods of worship.

We will share buffet lunch and dinner in three banquet rooms at the hotel Saturday. Adults will spend the majority of their time in worship, with one opportunity for discussion in groups. The

*continued next page*

## Plans for Mid-Year Sessions, Called Meeting for Worship (continued)

children will be engaged in a program with the theme of peace, customized to the number and ages of children attending. Young Friends (high-school age) attending the Mid-Year Sessions, Called Meeting for Worship will be part of the adult program (there is a Young Friends retreat at Wellesley the same weekend).

We will share box lunches on Sunday after the adults have a closing period of worship and the children conclude their program. Coffee and tea will be provided each morning.

An exercise room and swimming pool are available for our use during the weekend. The hotel also provides shuttle service between the hotel and the Transportation Center. Several attractions (including a large park and several museums) are close to the hotel.

Friends wishing to stay at the hotel must make reservations directly by phone with the hotel, 207/774-5611. Ask for "the NEYM group block rate" of \$89 per night for double occupancy rooms. Alternative housing can be found at nearby hotels, by requesting to be hosted in the homes of local Friends, or by bringing your own bedding and staying overnight at the Portland Meetinghouse (a 4-mile drive from the hotel).

The whole-weekend registration fee (covering meals and use of the facilities) for an adult is \$85, with lower fees for children or for those attending only part of the weekend. See the registration materials for further details (including the process for applying for Equalization Funds). A late fee will be charged for registrations post-marked or made online after Saturday, 4/4/2009. The limited capacity of the hotel means that registration may be closed if we reach 300. If arriving after the Friday evening registration period, look for registration instructions in the hotel lobby.

We urge Friends to take steps needed to take care of themselves through periods of extended worship. Make use of the break times on the schedule and create your own break when needed.

While the planning group found the hotel to be a pleasant facility with staff anxious to serve us, the carpeting and swimming pool make it less than ideal for those with chemical sensitivities.

We look forward to gathering at a new time in a new site. While we will miss some of the Friends and facilities we are used to at Bryant University, we look forward to meeting new Friends and experiencing a new location. Please come!

## Mid-Year Sessions Announcements

### Equalization Fund available

The Equalization Fund provides scholarships of up to 75% of the cost of attending NEYM Sessions. The Fund's goal is for no one to miss Sessions due to finances.

The Equalization Fund for Mid-Year Sessions is not intended to cover overnight costs at the Clarion Hotel. However, priority for home hospitality with local Friends will be given to people who request financial assistance from the Equalization Fund. Please request the financial assistance necessary for you to attend. Funds are limited, how-

ever, so request the minimum amount you need. Every additional dollar that you contribute toward your own costs helps the Equalization Fund support other Friends.

### Children's Program

This special mid-year gathering of Friends will combine the warmth and joy of a family reunion with the rare opportunity for extended worship and corporate discernment. Theresa Oleksiw of Durham (ME) Monthly Meeting is organizing the Children's Program with Beth Collea, the NEYM Christian Education Coordinator, assisting. We really want families to be able to attend and to have the weekend work well for the whole family. We think it is going to be a really positive experience. There will be childcare for our youngest and planned activities for children through age 13. We're looking for a few volunteers to help out. While Young Friends (high-school age) have a separate retreat at Wellesley, high-school age Friends, who choose to do so, are encouraged to join the adults in worship.

The Clarion Hotel has a nice pool and we may almost fill the hotel, so that it will have the feeling of one large community. Stay tuned for more details. Health/Permis-

sion Forms, one per each child attending, and a welcome letter will be sent to families with your registration acknowledgement. The form is also available online at neym.org. The Children's Program has limited space, so register early.

### Getting to Portland sustainably

The NEYM Earthcare Ministries Committee urges us to reduce NEYM's carbon footprint, by traveling to Portland in full cars, by taking public transportation, or by riding a bicycle! The NEYM Office will circulate a ride list and the hotel is a very short walk from the Concord Trailways and Amtrak stations.

The Committee reminds us that this "may seem like a tall order for many of us who are accustomed to the convenience of motoring to NEYM alone. But the handwriting is on the wall: Human-induced climate change is about to alter forever the way every one of us is living on this planet, whether we find it convenient or not. And if we want to continue having NEYM Sessions for all the Quaker meetings and churches in New England and a sustainable future for all of life, we will need to begin now to reduce the amount of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases we produce in order to get there."





## Accessibility Needs

On reverse side note all that apply under "Accessibility Needs Code(s)"

### Code

- a I have trouble with stairs
- b I use a wheelchair
- c I am hearing impaired
- d I have chemical sensitivity (please specify your level of sensitivity and please note that the hotel is not very chemical-sensitive friendly. The plenary room may be acceptable for people with mild chemical sensitivities. For further information, contact the NEYM office.)
- e I have dietary restrictions (e.g., vegetarian, please specify)
- f Other needs (please specify)

## Volunteer Opportunities (circle if interested in helping)

- Registration check-in on Fri. night, Sat., or Sun.
- Children's Program
- Care for infants & toddlers

## Children's Program Health/Permission Forms

Health/Permission Forms, one per each child attending, will be sent to families with your registration acknowledgement. The form is also available online at [neym.org](http://neym.org)

## Schedule

### Friday Night, April 17, 2009

- Bring bag dinner to share
- 5:00pm – 7:15pm, Registration
- 7:30pm – 7:45pm, Call to Worship
- 7:45pm – 9:00pm, Opening Worship

### Saturday, April 18, 2009

- Breakfast on our own
- 8:30am – 9:30am, Gather, Coffee and Tea
- 9:30am – 9:45am, Call to Worship
- 9:45am – 11:30am, Meeting for Worship
- 11:30am – 12:45pm, Buffet Lunch
- 1:00pm – 2:30pm, Small Group Discussion
- 2:45pm – 3:00pm, Call to Worship
- 3:00pm – 5:15pm, Meeting for Worship
- 5:30pm – 7:15pm, Buffet Dinner
- 7:30pm – 9:00pm, Meeting for Worship for Business or Open Worship

### Sunday Morning, April 19, 2009

- Breakfast on our own
- 8:30am – 9:15am, Gather, Coffee and Tea
- 9:15am – 9:30am, Call to Worship
- 9:30am – 11:30am, Concluding Worship
- 11:30am – 1:00pm, Box Lunch

## Register online or mail this form with check or credit card information

—\$50 (or if less, your total fees) is the **minimum**, non-refundable deposit—  
payable to "New England Yearly Meeting" to:

Cliff Harrison, NEYM Mid-Year Sessions Registrar, 135 Washington St.,  
Malden, MA 02148 • (781) 397-1419 • [registrar@neym.org](mailto:registrar@neym.org)

**Do not mail after April 10<sup>th</sup>.** Go to [neym.org](http://neym.org) or contact the Registrar

Online registration and copies of all forms at [neym.org](http://neym.org)

**A late fee of \$5 per individual up to a maximum of \$15 per form will be charged** for registrations postmarked, or made online, **after Saturday, April 4, 2009**

## 2009 NEYM Mid-Year Sessions Equalization Fund Request Form for Financial Aid (not intended to cover overnight hotel costs)

Monthly Meeting Full Name(s) <i>(Fill this form out COMPLETELY)</i>	A = B + C + D				
	List total costs for each individual to attend Mid-Year Sessions (from reverse side of form)	I can afford to pay this amount to attend Sessions (please send with registration form)	Amount your Meeting/Quarter will contribute towards your costs (please ask)	Equalization Fund request—to a maximum 75% of your total costs. (50% maximum after April 4 <sup>th</sup> )	
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$

The Equalization Fund provides scholarships of up to 75% of the cost of attending NEYM Sessions. The Fund's goal is for no one to miss Sessions due to finances.

The Equalization Fund for Mid-Year Sessions is **not intended to cover overnight costs at the Clarion Hotel**. However, priority for home hospitality with local Friends will be given to people who request financial assistance from the Equalization Fund. Please ask for what you need.

1. Check with your Meeting/Quarter for financial assistance. Write that amount in column C (at right).
2. Fill in and **complete ALL calculations** on the Equalization request form (right).
3. **Have your Meeting's Clerk sign the form.**
4. For applications postmarked after April 4, 2009, support from the Equalization Fund may be limited to 50% of your costs, if funds are still available. **Final deadline is April 10<sup>th</sup>.** After that, contact the Registrar.

Questions? Contact James Varner, Equalization Fund Representative on Sessions Committee, 207/827-4493.

Clerk's phone: \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**Monthly Meeting Clerk's signature (required)**

**Clerk:** Please verify the funding the applicant will receive from your Meeting or Quarter that is entered on column C above

# Around the Yearly Meeting

Compiled from monthly meeting newsletters and correspondence by Jonathan Vogel-Borne

• **South Berkshire (MA) Monthly Meeting (MM)** First Day School is corresponding with Quaker children in Pemba Yearly Meeting, located on a island off the coast of Africa. The children are enthusiastic about writing to Quakers their own age, “however great the English-Swahili language divide may turn out to be.”

• **Northampton (MA) MM** plans a 3/22/2009 public witness for peace. Friends will stand in downtown Northampton holding a meeting for worship, open to vocal ministry, underneath two banners, one that reads “Pain of War,” and the other, “Making Peace.”

• **Portland (ME) MM** has appointed two Friends to be Networkers for Peace & Social Concerns, a newly created position. In an effort to “spare the Peace & Social Concerns Committee the networking function that tended to overwork and overwhelm the Committee in the past,” the Networkers will

“help Friends discover: 1) who is doing what within the community and within the wider world; 2) where one can go to find out more about a particular peace and or social justice matter; and 3) to whom one might turn to raise consciousness around a particular peace and social justice concern about which one cares deeply.”

• **Winthrop Center Friends Church (ME) MM** initiated a “Ton of Love” project to raise a ton of food for the local food pantry. Joining with two other area churches they have collected close to 900 lbs of food.

• **Allen’s Neck (MA) MM** sponsors a once-a-month Afghan Group, that knits afghan blankets, sweaters, scarves and hats that are donated to homeless mothers and children. To date, they have delivered 109 afghans, 14 baby sweaters, 30 scarves and 20 hats.

• **Worcester (MA) MM** hosted a public showing of *Americans Who Tell the Truth*, six

portraits by the artist Robert Shetterly of Brookville, ME. The newest portrait in the series is of Frances Crowe, long time Quaker peace activist and a member of Mt. Toby (MA) MM. On 11/15/2009, Frances Crowe joined a gathering at the Worcester meetinghouse for an evening of poetry: *Truth Tellers at Worcester Friends Meeting*.

• **Westport (MA) MM** initiated a process that will provide documentation for any child enrolled in the meeting’s First Day School proving to the Selective Service System that the child has received teaching in the Quaker pacifist tradition of non-violence.



Westport (MA) Meetinghouse

Line Drawing. © Gordon Bugbee

## In other Quaker news

### Committee on Aging meeting survey

NEYM's Committee on Aging is building community by talking about their own stories of aging—their delights, fears and concerns about the process. To help the Committee better serve local meetings, they are surveying meetings to get ideas on where they should concentrate their energies. Using the list of items below, please indicate what are the concerns and interests of your meeting and also what you, as an individual, a couple, or as a family have questions about or wish help with. *Areas of Interest:* Assisted hearing systems, finances, transportation, accessibility, advanced directives, decluttering our homes, housing options, health and nutrition, other ideas? Send your responses to Penny Yunuba, 38 St. Rose St., Jamaica Plain, MA 02130 • [PYunuba@comcast.net](mailto:PYunuba@comcast.net)

### Friends Camp website upgraded

Friends Camp's upgraded website is offering new “green” features. Families can now sign up with paperless, on-line registration,

and on-line payments can be made with a PayPal account. Also on the website are the camp brochure, the camper parent handbook, health forms, packing lists, and the parent reference list. Go to [friendscamp.org](http://friendscamp.org)

### Peace Tax Fund & war tax witness

Last summer, NEYM endorsed the Peace Tax Fund Bill. The Bill, pending before Congress, provides an alternative for those who are conscientiously opposed to paying taxes for war. NEYM Nominating Committee is looking for someone to represent us on the Peace Tax Fund's Board. Also, NEYM continues to hold an escrow account to receive diverted tax money from individuals who wish to resist military taxes. Contact the NEYM Office.

### Moses Brown School names new Head

Moses Brown has announced that Matt Glendinning will be the next Head of School. Matt has been a faculty member and administrator at Moorestown Friends School and at Germantown Friends for the past 12 years.

His grounding in Friends educational philosophy and practice is solid.

Matt stated in the interview process: “I believe strongly that Quaker values will be critical for the kind of education needed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. I believe that Quaker schools are uniquely suited for these future challenges. The Friends legacy of personal engagement with social activism, peace, simplicity and stewardship causes Quaker schools to be *questioning* places, where students are encouraged, indeed are expected, to ask “why?” Friends schools are uniquely characterized by respect for others; a life of the mind, body and spirit; and a grounding in tradition energized by openness to new ideas and new revelation.”

### Trayce Peterson BHFH Weed Lecturer

Beacon Hill Friends House (BHFH) presents the 2009 Weed Lecture: *Where do you find God?* delivered by Trayce Peterson of Western YM, Sunday, 3/29/2009, at 1pm. Contact BHFH, 617/227-9118 • [bhfh.org](http://bhfh.org)

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**New England Yearly Meeting of Friends**  
**901 Pleasant Street**  
**Worcester, MA 01602-1908**



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 Yearly Meeting to the NEYM Office,  
 901 Pleasant Street, Worcester, MA 01602-1908

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 changes or monthly meeting membership changes

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# THE NEW ENGLAND FRIEND

**March 2009**

- 13–15 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Retreat — Westport, MA
- 14 Ministry & Counsel — Framingham, MA
- 19–22 Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC),  
 Section of the Americas Annual Meeting — Canby, OR
- 20–21 Ministry & Counsel sponsored Stillness Retreat —  
 Portsmouth, NH [*Contact Charlotte Fardelmann,*  
*603/436-7652 • [cfardelmann@comcast.net](mailto:cfardelmann@comcast.net)]*
- 20–22 Young Friends Retreat — Mt. Toby, Leverett, MA
- 21 Permanent Board — New London (Waterford), CT
- 28 Sessions Committee — Kendal at Hanover, NH
- 29 Dover Quarterly Meeting (QM) — Gonic, NH

**April 2009**

- 6 Coordinating & Advisory — Worcester, MA
- 11 Committee Day — Leverett Elementary School, MA
- 17–19 Mid-Year Sessions, Called Meeting for Worship —  
 Clarion Hotel, Portland, ME
- 17–19 Young Friends Retreat — Wellesley, MA
- 19 RI-Smithfield Quarterly Meeting (QM) — Westerly, RI
- 24–25 Stillness Retreat — Portsmouth, NH [*see 3/20–21 above*]
- 25 Sandwich QM — South Yarmouth, MA
- 26 Falmouth QM — Portland, ME
- 26 Salem QM — Amesbury, MA

**May 2009**

- 1–3 Jr. High Retreat — Portland, ME
- 2 All Maine Gathering — Friends Camp, South China, ME
- 3 Connecticut Valley QM — Middletown, CT
- 4 Coordinating & Advisory — Worcester, MA
- 9 Permanent Board — Northampton, MA

- 15–17 Jr. YM Retreat—Woolman Hill, Deerfield, MA
- 23 Quaker Leadership/Clerking Workshop — Barton, VT
- 29–30 Stillness Retreat — Portsmouth, NH [*see 3/20–21 above*]
- 31 Dover QM — Weare, NH

**June 2009**

- 6–7 Northwest QM — Farm & Wilderness, Plymouth VT
- 13 Committee Day — New Haven, CT
- 15 Coordinating & Advisory — Worcester, MA
- 27–7/4 Friends General Conference Gathering, Blacksburg, VA

**July 2009**

- 12 Coordinating & Advisory — *Location TBA*
- 19 RI-Smithfield QM — Worcester, MA
- 25 Sandwich QM — Allen’s Neck, MA
- 26 Falmouth QM — Brunswick, ME

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**Note:** The *Faith & Practice* Revision Committee generally  
 meets on the first or last Saturday of each month.

**2009 Sessions, Sat. August 1 – Thurs. August 6**  
**—Bryant University, Smithfield, Rhode Island—**

**Theme:** *Living into Jubilee*  
**Keynote:** Phillip Raines, Pastor, Durham (ME) Monthly Meeting  
**Bible Half Hour:** Eden Grace, Beacon Hill (MA) Friends Meeting  
**Tuesday Night:** Amanda Kemp, Lancaster (PA) Friends Meeting,  
 and her theater troupe presenting, *Show Me the Franklins*, a play  
 about Benjamin Franklin and his slaves.