

## **Permanent Board Agenda**

**December 13, 2025**

### **Concord Friends Meeting**

**9:00 AM - 3:30 PM EDT**

#### **PB agenda items**

- 8:30 AM                      Greetings and fellowship
- 9:00 AM                      Opening Worship
- **Approval** of PB Recording Clerk
- Roll Call
- PB clerk's comments
- September 27, 2025 Permanent Board Minutes, for **Approval**
- Memorandum of Understanding for use of Salem Quarter Fund, for **Approval**
- Salem Quarterly Meeting status update and invitation for PB input
- Yearly Meeting Secretary's Report, in part
- Presiding Clerk's Report and Coordinating and Advisory Report
  - Earthcare Ministries PP&C, for **Approval**

#### **Afternoon**

- Budget and Finance update
- Living Stream Travel Team, interactive presentation
- Nominating Committee- for **Approval of Nominations**
- Memorial Minutes- First Readings and **Approval**

#### **Closing Worship**

The minutes from September were not available. They will be brought to Permanent Board in February 2026.

## **DRAFT MINUTES OF CALLED MEETING ON GAZA 18 TENTH MONTH 2025**

**(note that the temporary minute numbers 25-\*1, 25-\*2 and 25-\*3 will get final numbers after the next Permanent Board meeting)**

### **•Introduction from clerk of Permanent Board**

Friends gathered online on 18 Tenth Month 2025 at 3 p.m. for a called online meeting of the New England Yearly Meeting Permanent Board. After a period of silence, Clerk of Permanent Board Susan Davies (Vassalboro) opened the meeting with a statement welcoming Friends to this specially called meeting. She explained that the Permanent Board was acting with the authority of the Yearly Meeting, as recorded in Minute 2025-57.

Sessions Minute 2025-57 states:

**“The meeting charged the Presiding Clerk and the Permanent Board with scheduling a special called meeting of New England Friends as soon as possible, before 2025 comes to a close, for the purpose of sharing and encouraging work that is already being done in the Yearly Meeting, and worshipfully discerning a corporate response to the crisis in Gaza.**

**Friends approved this minute.**

After reading this minute, the Permanent Board Clerk explained that this gathering is neither strictly a Permanent Board meeting nor is it a re-convening of NEYM annual Sessions, but it does carry the weight of those bodies. While this meeting cannot speak for all Friends in New England Yearly Meeting, we have been charged by Sessions to seek and affirm unity within this Body, gathered here on this day.

### **•Approval of presiding clerk, recording clerk, and reading clerk for this meeting.**

The Clerk of Permanent Board requested approval of an acting Clerk's Table to serve for this called meeting:

Phillip Veatch (Fresh Pond), NEYM Presiding Clerk, acting Clerk for this Called Meeting  
Mark Conley (Providence), Recording Clerk, and  
Regina McCarthy (Wellesley), Reading Clerk

## **Friends approved.**

The Permanent Board Clerk also informed those present that Carole Rein (North Shore) and Sarah Allen (Cambridge) would serve as elders, holding the meeting in care.

### **•Opening worship**

Acting Clerk Phillip Veatch welcomed Friends, reviewed the agenda for this meeting and invited the group into waiting worship.

### **•Sharing and encouraging work that individuals and groups within the yearly meeting have done or are doing on Israel-Palestine issues.**

From the silence, Friends began sharing the work of individuals and groups within the yearly meeting.

Examples of work arising from the leadings of individual Friends include participation in public demonstrations, creating written statements for local media, writing letters to legislators, working with others to directly advocate with federal legislators for changes in budget allocations, volunteering for organizations in Palestine, and delivering public talks on personal experiences with the issue as a form of spiritual leading.

Examples of the work of peace and social justice committees include educational events, legislative postcard campaigns and a fundraising concert to benefit the Ramallah Friends School Children's Relief Fund.

Examples of initiatives of monthly meetings include donations to organizations supporting peace work in the region, sending delegations for public weekly vigils, approving of minutes written within monthly meetings or unifying with the minutes of other meetings or Friends organizations, and forming a coalition with other faith organizations including Jewish and Muslim organizations, which has given a sense of solidarity in the work as well as an enhanced profile in the community.

A Friend encouraged those present to remember that voices of faith really do matter in witnessing before the general public and in working with members of the government.

### **•Consideration of a minute of actions and queries**

Turning the meeting to the next item on the agenda, the Acting Clerk explained the purpose of this Minute of Action and Queries, which is intended to serve as a reference for those who wish to be more involved with this work, whether by becoming more informed or by taking action. He invited those present to add items to the initial minute,

compiled in large part by the Israel-Palestine Resource Group and shared with the yearly meeting in a previous email. Friends encouraged one another to remember that this work has urgency, to take this information back to monthly and quarterly meetings, and to consider steps that can be taken individually or in conjunction with others that go beyond that which is already being done.

### **Minute 25-\*1**

- 1) Engage with the AFSC Palestinian Program in their Fall 2025 efforts: Read, Mourn, Learn and Act; and consider taking up steps in the program in your monthly meeting.

[https://prod.cdn.everyaction.com/emails/van/AFSC/AFSC/1/57559/TUCLsb5NCX6LNQwBLPLa6Bi-CMcGhI4w94PMX0Rx\\_DL\\_archive](https://prod.cdn.everyaction.com/emails/van/AFSC/AFSC/1/57559/TUCLsb5NCX6LNQwBLPLa6Bi-CMcGhI4w94PMX0Rx_DL_archive)

<https://afsc.org/news/6-ways-you-can-support-palestinians-gaza>

- 2) Support Jewish neighbors

These two years have been deeply challenging in the Jewish Community. Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP) is an incredible organization, but for years it has been demonized by APAIC (the American Israel Public Affairs Committee )and others, so it isn't always easy to turn to. There are increasing numbers of individuals who are horrified by what is being done supposedly in their name. It can be incredibly hard to speak up, but it is happening. How do we as individuals reach out to these folks and help them find their voices? What support do they need?

How do we support our Jewish neighbors who are targets of antisemitic actions? How can meetings and individuals reach out to Jewish communities and be clear of our support for their human rights and dignity regardless of political affinities?

[jewishvoiceforpeace.org](http://jewishvoiceforpeace.org)

- 3) Learn more about tax resistance and how to support those making this choice. Next conference is November 7-9, 2025 at Worcester Friends Meetinghouse

<https://nwtrcc.org>

<https://www.warresisters.org/war-tax-resistance/>

- 4) Support those in or considering military service who struggle with conscience

<https://girightshotline.org>.

<https://quakerhouse.org/>

- 5) Travel to the area and bear witness to the suffering. Contact us at <https://neym.org/israel-palestine-resource-group> to connect with those who have.

- 6) Provide financial support for the relief of suffering:

Palestinian Children's Relief Fund

<https://www.pcrf.net/>

<https://www.healpalestine.org/>

AFSC Gaza relief <https://afsc.org/news/afscs-gaza-emergency-relief>

Support Ramallah Friends School in the West Bank, which lost US AID funding:

<https://www.rfs.edu.ps/en>

- 7) Invite your Meeting to hold this discussion

Peace and Reconciliation

Do you "live in the virtue of that life and power that takes away the occasion of all wars"?

Do you faithfully maintain Friends' testimony against military preparations and all participation in war, as inconsistent with the teachings and spirit of Christ?

Do you strive to increase understanding and use of nonviolent methods of resolving conflicts?

Do you take your part in the ministry of reconciliation between individuals, groups, and nations?

When discouraged, do you remember that Jesus said, "Peace is my parting gift to you, my own peace, such the world cannot give. Set your troubled hearts at rest, and banish your fears"? John 14:27 NEB

NEYM 1985 Faith and Practice  
Query 12

8) Discussion of Britain Yearly Meeting's Statement on Genocide in Gaza

Adapted for United States Friends by Quakers for Peace:

[https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1w7u1Gr\\_ZXMeQ9Nj1JzJQnlaQe0Y1r8F4/edit?slide=id.p1#slide=id.p1](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1w7u1Gr_ZXMeQ9Nj1JzJQnlaQe0Y1r8F4/edit?slide=id.p1#slide=id.p1)

9) And, finally, how do we hold ourselves accountable? Can the Israel Palestine Resource Group assist Meetings and Quarters in discerning what is ours to do?

**Friends approved this minute.**

**•Consideration of unity with other previously written minutes**

The meeting turned to consideration of statements on the situation in Gaza coming previously from our Yearly Meeting and now from other organizations.

The discussion included considering the call for "courageous action" urged in the statement from the American Friends Service Committee. Rather than approving statements of others, some Friends proposed direct, substantive action that might include sending members of the New England Yearly Meeting to Gaza as non-violent observers to the situation and witnesses to peace. Another suggestion was for the Yearly Meeting to organize a concerted lobbying effort to Congress in order to influence decisions on spending and policy. Another Friend reflected on the slow progress of justice, and the importance of education and the need to witness to those who live in our community who hold other opinions.

Other Friends considered the power in uniting with a statement that is as straightforward as the Joint Quaker Organizations Statement on genocide in Gaza, "[Quakers discern genocide is occurring in Gaza and urge courageous action](#)."

**Minute 25-\*2**

**The clerk asked if the body gathered was comfortable having the Presiding Clerk and the Yearly Meeting Secretary endorse the Joint Quaker Organizations**

**Statement on genocide in Gaza, mindful of the Policy on Public Statements (2015-57).**

**Friends approved.**

Returning to the discussion around sending witnesses to Gaza from the Yearly Meeting, the Presiding Clerk asked the body if it would want to direct the Permanent Board, in conjunction with the Israel-Palestine Resource Group, to consider this possible action.

**Minute 25-\*3**

**The meeting charged the Presiding Clerk, the Clerk of Permanent Board and the Israel-Palestine Resource Group to convene to explore, in consultation with those with experience in the region and who could provide context on the ground, the idea of sending witnesses to Gaza from the Yearly Meeting. After this consideration, this group will bring a recommendation forward to Permanent Board for their discernment.**

**Friends approved.**

The Presiding Clerk released the Meeting, noting the depth of worship and the care with which we considered the issue and how tenderly we held one another in our time together.

## **Cover Letter introducing the MOU**

**To Legacy Gift Committee and Permanent Board (acting on behalf of Salem Qtr)**

Dec 6, 2025

Dear Friends,

Below/attached is a draft MOU for your review and approval. The purpose is to resume availability and disbursement of funds from the Salem Quarter Fund, with Legacy Gift Committee carrying out the grant awarding application review process and discernment.

**Current Situation:** Permanent Board currently carries out the business of Salem Quarter until Salem Quarter resumes functioning. In May 2025, the Clerk of Permanent Board appointed a working group of Mary Link, prior clerk of Legacy Gift Committee; Morgan Wilson, past clerk of Salem Quarter Funds Committee; and John Robinson, treasurer of Salem Quarter to draft a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to resume availability and disbursement of funds from the Salem Quarter Fund by Legacy Gift Committee. (PB minute May 10, 2025 #25-21) Legacy Gift Committee to also be included in the process. What follows is our draft proposed MOU.

**Your Action Steps:** Consideration of this MOU for approval is needed from both Legacy Gift Committee and Permanent Board. Legacy Gift Committee will resume carrying out the discernment of grantmaking from Salem Quarter's grant funds beginning upon final approval by Permanent Board. If Salem Quarter resumes functioning before those approvals occur, then Salem Quarter will participate in the approval process.

Legacy Gift's next application deadline is March 15, 2026. It would be ideal if this MOU could be approved before that time, so that Salem Quarter's funds could again be made available for granting as part of that funding cycle.

Please let us know if you have any questions.

In the Light,

Mary Link, for the Mou working group

## **DRAFT MOU for approval:**

### **Memorandum of Understanding to resume availability and disbursement of funds from the Salem Quarter Fund by Legacy Gift Committee - Dec 2025**

Submitted to Permanent Board by Mary Link as a member of a working group of Mary Link, prior clerk of Legacy Gift Committee; Morgan Wilson, past clerk of Salem Quarter Funds Committee; and John Robinson, treasurer of Salem Quarter - appointed by and at the request of PB Clerk Susan Davies. (as minuted in PB minutes May 10, 2025 #25-21)

#### **Outline:**

Current Proposal Dec 2025

Background & History

#### **Current Proposal - 2025:**

That the Legacy Gift Committee resume carrying out the discernment of grantmaking from Salem Quarter's grant funds until such time as either party chooses to change or end this agreement. To begin upon approval by Permanent Board.

Salem Quarter grant funds (interest earned on principle) will be distributed via the NEYM Legacy Gift Committee using Witness & Ministry Fund guidelines, with preference/priority given to applicants from the 13 meetings and worship groups in the Salem Quarter region. The list of Salem Quarter meetings can be found on the NEYM website: <https://neym.org/quarterly-meetings/salem-quarter> Salem Quarter Treasurer (or Acting Treasurer if there is a gap in treasurers) will support and advise the Legacy Gift Committee, write the grant award checks and keep appropriate records.

#### **Process:**

If Legacy Gift Committee agrees to take on the discernment for distribution of Salem Quarter Funds as outlined in this agreement and Permanent Board approves (on behalf of Salem Quarter), the process could look like this:

- Pooled Funds Administrator notifies Salem Quarter treasurer (currently John Robinson) of the distribution from the Pooled funds for SQ Fund (#8) - transferring 1% per quarter (4% per annum) of the average balance in the Pooled Funds account to a SQ checking account managed by the Salem Quarter treasurer.
- Salem Quarter treasurer (currently John Robinson) communicates to Legacy Gift Committee Clerk(s) the amount of funds available for Legacy Gift to allocate for grants - using the Witness & Ministry Fund guidelines. (This figure is the released distribution from the Pooled Funds less any money used for SQ Sabbath Programming or other approved needs).
- The Legacy Gift Committee releases the request for proposals on their cycle / timeline, using their application and interview/review process until the available funds are dispersed. A preference is given to applicants from Salem Quarter.
- The Salem Quarter Treasurer is invited to participate in the grant discernment process, as an ex-officio member of Legacy Gift for the purpose advising them as to the amount of funds available and in other ways, as needed whenever there are requests that will draw from the Salem Quarter funds.
- Once Legacy Gift Committee has discerned grant awards that will be drawn from Salem Quarter funds, the Legacy Clerk will send the relevant information (grantee contact info and

amount of grant) and the grant award letters to the SQ Treasurer, who will then mail the grant checks and award letters to grantees.

- If available Salem Quarter funds are not fully distributed to grantees each year, any remaining funds will be rolled over to remain available for the next year of grants.
- Salem Quarter funds remain in the Salem Quarter accounts. Any funds remaining after grants are awarded will remain with the Salem Quarter funds.
- The distribution of the Buffam Breed Boyce funds for suffering will NOT be overseen by Legacy Gift. These funds will continue to be distributed by the Salem Quarter treasurer in consultation with the clerk of the Meeting making the request, on behalf of a Friend in the Quarter.
- This agreement, once approved, will continue to be in place until either entity involved: Legacy Gift Committee or Salem Quarter (or NEYM Permanent Board on behalf of SQ if SQ is not meeting) chooses to change or end it.

## **Background & History:**

### **Salem Quarter Funds (background)**

Salem Quarter is blessed with funds available to support emerging and established ministry. Salem Quarter's funding guidelines have leaned strongly toward making grants that arise from, and are supported by, the meetings of the Quarter and which nourish and encourage a vital spiritual condition in those meetings, including strong bonds between them. Prior to 2022, the Quarter issued a call for proposals each spring and fall centered on three funding priorities (below). The available amount of funds was, and continues to be determined by the performance of the NEYM Pooled "Fund #8," which is held for Salem Quarter. Four times a year 1% of the Pooled Funds account is released to the Quarter by the Pooled Funds administrator - and most of that money is made available, via the Salem Quarter Treasurer, as grants.

When completed proposals were received by Salem Quarter, a committee reviewed the grants based on the application's fit with grant funding criteria, the applicant's connection to the Quarter, and how well they supported outreach/inreach ministry -- recommending proposals for funding, or not. The recommendations were sent to the Salem Quarterly Meeting for Worship for Business - for final approval. Funds were not distributed without the Quarter coming to unity. The Quarter, as a gathered body, had final say about funds disbursement.

## **History of SQM Sabbath and LGC initial agreement: 2022 - 2025**

### **Salem Quarter Sabbath**

Salem Quarterly Meeting began a period of Sabbath rest from business beginning after their meeting in Spring 2022. This was intended to last for a period of 1-2 years, ending by spring of 2024, but has continued. The Sabbath period meant that Salem Quarter would not gather for discernment about the distribution of funds. Since these funds were an important source of ministry support in the quarter, Salem Quarter reached out to the NEYM Legacy Gift Committee and together an agreement was made for the Legacy Gift Committee to shepherd the process of granting Salem Quarter's funds, using Legacy Gift's Futures Fund guidelines, through June 2024. This was approved by Salem Quarter at its meeting on May 22, 2022. And by NEYM Sessions in August 2022 (minute #2022-45) which stated the following: *"Salem Quarter grants will be distributed by the Legacy Gift Committee to refresh and restart the Legacy Futures Fund, with a preference given to applicants from the monthly meetings of Salem Quarter. Salem Quarter's treasurer, John Robinson, has agreed to stay engaged during the period of Sabbath and will continue to support and advise the Legacy Gift Committee."*

## **NEYM Legacy Gift Committee: (Background & History)**

The Legacy Gift Committee was appointed by Annual Sessions in 2014 to develop procedures and oversee the disbursement of monies from the funds created with the proceeds of the sale of the New England Friends Home. The purpose of the Legacy Gift Funds is to support the ministries of New England Yearly Meeting Friends, both within and beyond our region.

There were originally two Funds: The NEYM Witness and Ministry Fund and the Future Fund. The Legacy Gift Committee fulfilled its charge for disbursing the Future Fund by granting all of those designated funds, awarding the last round of grants from the Future Fund in November 2020. In 2022, Legacy Gift agreed to shepherd Salem Quarter's grant funds through refreshing the Legacy Futures Fund using the interest earned on principle of Salem Quarter investments in the Pooled Funds of NEYM, with priority given to members of Salem Quarter. The Witness & Ministry Fund continued as usual.

As the initial 10 years of the Legacy Gift Funds program was to be reviewed in 2024, with the decision for its continuance dependent on approval by NEYM Sessions that August, the Legacy Gift Committee agreed to shepherd the granting of the Salem Quarter Funds, from fall 2022 through June 2024.

The Future Fund sought to strengthen spirit-led witness through the funding of public and released ministry, supporting current NEYM priorities such as anti-racism, Native American concerns (including apologizing for harm by Quakers to Native Americans), climate change, and other areas of focus that Friends felt called to, as well as meetinghouse improvement projects.

### **2024 Legacy Gift Update:**

During 2024 Sessions, the Legacy Gift Funds were continued, with another review in 2034 and the Future Fund was merged into one fund, the Witness and Ministry Fund ([Minute 2024-62](#)). Current details about the Witness & Ministry Fund and the application process can be found here <https://neym.org/legacy-gift/legacy-grants-apply-now>.

Last updated 12/6/2025

**To: Permanent Board**

**From Kristina Keefe-Perry and Phil Veatch**

**Date December 10, 2025**

**RE: Status report on efforts to resume Salem Quarterly Meeting administrative responsibilities**

Salem Quarter is an historically rooted regional body of New England Yearly Meeting, with a long tradition of fostering connection, discernment, and mutual care among its Monthly Meetings. Today, the Quarter finds itself at a crossroads moment without leadership or structure following a two-year Sabbath period (2022–2024) that released its traditional structures in order to create space for re-connection, renewal, and reimagining.

This report provides:

- Historical background,
- Conditions that led to the Sabbath,
- Sabbath activities,
- Current status of the Quarter, and
- Request for Monthly Meetings to help discern the next faithful step.

### **Historical Context**

Salem Quarter is among the earliest Quaker bodies in New England, dating back to the 1600s. Historically, it covered areas in Massachusetts, Maine, and New Hampshire but today focuses on meetings around Boston. Like many Quaker bodies, over its history Salem Quarter saw internal divisions (like the 1845 Wilburite separation), and also saw other quarters (eg: Falmouth, Dover) set off from it.

Current Structure: It now comprises ten monthly meetings in the Greater Boston area, including Acton, Amesbury, Beacon Hill (Boston), Framingham, Friends Meeting at Cambridge, Fresh Pond (Cambridge), Lawrence–Andover (Methuen), North Shore, Three Rivers, Wellesley; along with South Shore Preparative and Brookhaven Worship Group (both under the care of FMC).

By the early 21st century, Quarters across NEYM were experiencing transformations, and Salem Quarter participation became inconsistent and capacity for leadership waned. In 2022 Salem Quarter laid down business for a two-year Sabbath period. This is the context for understanding the present moment.

## **Conditions Leading to the 2022–2024 Sabbath**

At a listening session on January 22, 2022, Friends confronted a pattern:

- The terms of all officers were ending in Spring 2022.
- The Treasurer alone was willing to continue; the Clerk and Recording Clerk had already extended their terms for an additional year.
- No one was led into service on the committees of the Quarter.

Recognizing that the existing structure no longer energized Friends or served current needs, a listening session named a Sabbath Planning Committee to design a period of rest, reflection, and release. That committee was Charm Wood-Harrington (Wellesley), Ellen Neelands (Acton), Kathleen Stearns (Amesbury), Kathleen Wooten (Lawrence), and Kristina Keefe-Perry (Clerk of the Quarter / Fresh Pond).

## **The Purpose and Spirit of the Sabbath**

The Sabbath Proposal (approved May 22, 2022) framed the intention as “Sabbath is not simply the pause that refreshes. It is the pause that transforms... an invitation to receptivity.”

The proposal emphasized four core aims:

1. Grounding in Quaker faith and practice
2. Deepening relationships by fostering “holy encounters”
3. Creating intergenerational opportunities for play
4. Discerning the future form and function of the Quarter.

Monthly Meetings were invited to host gatherings throughout the two years—not for business, but for renewal, joy, connection, and exploration.

## **Delegated Responsibilities During the Sabbath**

To allow the Quarter to step back from business, essential responsibilities were delegated:

1. Permanent Board

The then Clerk of Permanent Board agreed to assume oversight of:

- receiving and endorsing travel minutes
- lifting up or laying down Meetings
- discerning recording of gifts in ministry

## 2. Legacy Gift Committee

Legacy oversaw administration of the Salem Quarter Grant Funds (which support Ministry in the Quarter as well as a funds for sufferings) during the Sabbath, using released interest to “refresh and restart” the Legacy Futures Fund, with priority for Salem Quarter applicants.

## 3. Beacon Hill Friends House

BHFH provided critical organizing support and event coordination, communications, and website management: Initiating planning... running event registration for gatherings.

## **What Happened During the Sabbath (2022–2024)**

Meetings across the Quarter hosted a rotation of programs, including historical presentations, explorations of leadings, intergenerational gatherings, and worship-sharing events.

- Some gatherings were well attended (e.g., a fall 2023 session with ~30 participants).
- Participation was inconsistent across the Quarter.
- It remained (s) unclear whether the Sabbath reinvigorated the Quarter.

The final gathering—held at Friends Meeting at Cambridge on May 19, 2024—asked:

“After almost two years of Salem Quarter’s Sabbath... how is Spirit moving through our communities? What is giving life?”

## **The Current Status of Salem Quarter (2024–2025)**

When the Sabbath's delegation of responsibilities ended in Spring 2024, the Quarter emerged into an undefined state:

- There are no active officers approved by the Quarter.
- Essential business can occur only if a Meeting for Business is convened and *pro-tem* officers are appointed.
- Legacy Gift Committee and Permanent Board were no longer responsible for overseeing Quarter funds and responsibilities.
- The Quarter is functioning neither as an active business body nor as a structured community body.

This period of inactivity is a laying down of the Quarter, with the consequence of releasing all formal structure without yet taking up a new one. At the close of the Sabbath only 2 of the 5 original committee members were able / willing to serve (Ellen Neelands, Kristina Keefe-Perry). They were joined, for a time, by David Coletta (Fresh Pond) and Phil Veatch (Fresh Pond) who expressed an interest in the Life of the Quarter. This committee wrote an invitation to meetings to form an “exploratory” representative body in April of 2025 inviting meetings to name members to an expanded “Post Sabbath Committee.” The hope is that an expanded planning committee can come up with a process for discerning a vision, and then invite meetings of the Quarter to embark on their own process of discernment about what aspects of the vision support their needs, and how they want to participate. Perhaps this will take the form of a new quarter or quarters, perhaps it will be a continuation of Salem Quarter, or perhaps something entirely different will emerge from the discernment. The planning committee has invited each Monthly Meeting to identify one or two representatives to join a broadened visioning group to bring the perspective and needs of their meeting, help discern what next steps are for the Quarter, and guide a discernment process for all Meetings in the Quarter.

At the time of this writing we have representatives from the following meetings:

Beacon Hill - Alana Parkes

Amesbury - Greg Moschetti

Fresh Pond - Christopher Haines & Willa Taber

Lawrence - Janice Sifferlen

Wellesley - Martha Schwope

In Discernment:

Friends Meeting at Cambridge invited a presentation in January at their “Forum”  
.North Shore had this on their business meeting agenda December 7.

### **Emerging Directions: A Reimagined Quarter**

The idea of a reconvened Salem Quarter Representative Committee would be to explore possible futures.

#### **Key Questions Being Raised**

1. Affinity-based commitment  
“What would it be like if... the Quarter was something that a Monthly Meeting decided to commit to explicitly?”
2. New possible structures
  - A renewed Salem Quarter
  - Multiple smaller Quarters
  - A non-geographic regional network
  - A covenantal “opt-in” model

As the shape and timing of Annual Sessions shifts to a shorter one, there are many opportunities for Monthly and Quarterly meetings to step into roles of discernment and seasoning of the business that arises among us. It is our hope that Friends in Salem Quarter will find a way forward that allows the Meetings to gather again for Fellowship, support, ministry, worship, and discernment.

Dear Friends of Salem Quarter,

When Salem Quarter laid down most of its work, it left behind a Sabbath Planning Committee to help bring the quarter out of its Sabbath. This committee has met and asks that you consider the attached announcement. Note that we are hoping for a response by June 15.

In the Spirit,

The Sabbath Planning Committee—Kristina Keefe-Perry, Ellen Neelands, David Coletta, and Phillip Veatch.

*Sent to Salem Quarter Monthly Meeting Clerks and the SQM mailing list April 24, 2025*  
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## Introduction

As you know, Salem Quarter has been in a period of sabbath since 2022. The plan that the Sabbath Planning Committee made in 2022, [summarized below](#), was for that sabbath period to end in the Spring of 2024. The Sabbath Planning Committee has reconvened, and now consists of Kristina Keefe-Perry (Fresh Pond/Three Rivers) and Ellen Neelands (Acton) from the committee's previous membership, and so far has welcomed David Coletta (Fresh Pond/Three Rivers) and Phil Veatch (Fresh Pond) to join the committee.

## Proposal for Moving Forward

The Sabbath Planning Committee would like to expand to include more people from more of the meetings in the quarter, and then it would like to focus on creating a new vision of what quarterly meetings could be. Our first step is to ask you as a clerk of your meeting to find out whether one or two people in your meeting who would like to join this rebooted planning committee. We suggest that it could be one of your MM co-clerks, but there may be other possibilities too. Please email us at [salemqm@neym.org](mailto:salemqm@neym.org). We would appreciate a response by June 15, 2025.

We recognize that it may be helpful for you, in looking for people to be part of the planning committee, to know something about this new vision. The main parameters of the vision that the planning committee has discussed are:

- Today, being part of a Quarter is determined by where your meetinghouse falls on a map of New England. What would it be like if, instead of that implicit membership in the Quarter, the Quarter was something that a Monthly Meeting decided to commit to explicitly, in alignment with purpose?

## *Salem Quarter Sabbath Planning Committee outreach to members of the Salem Quarter*

- There has been ample evidence in the last few decades that as a whole, the meetings of Salem Quarter have not gotten a lot out of being part of the Quarter, as evidenced by the lack of participation and especially the lack of people willing to take on leadership. Although many individuals have participated over the years and gotten a lot out of their individual participation, the quarter hasn't been a significant part of the life of our meetings.
- The Salem Quarter sabbatical resulted in lack of clarity about what Monthly Meetings and individuals want from a Quarter.
- Salem Quarter remains true to roots developed in the 1600s and has changed with modern realities, including lessons from the pandemic.

After the expanded planning committee fleshes out this vision, it will invite the meetings of the quarter to embark on a process of discernment about what aspects of the vision support their needs, and how they want to participate. Perhaps this will take the form of a new quarter or quarters, perhaps it will be a continuation of Salem Quarter, or perhaps something entirely different will emerge from our discernment.

## Summary of the Sabbath Period

At a listening session of Salem Quarter held January 22, 2022, Friends learned that the terms of the quarter's current officers are up in Spring of 2022. Except for the Treasurer, who agreed to serve an additional term, no one stepped forward into leadership of the Quarter (this after the Clerk and Recording Clerk extended their terms for an extra year). In fact, reflecting a long-developing trend, we found that no one felt called into service on any of the committees of the Quarter. Those gathered at the listening session participated in a brainstorming activity about the future of the Quarter and named a sabbatical committee to follow up.

Through reflection and discussion grounded in worship, the committee developed a proposal that outlined a period of Sabbath for the Quarter. This period of Sabbath was envisioned as lifting up connection, possibilities for delight, and opportunities for grief and lament. It was seen as a time for making space and discovering something new.

During the two-year period, with the logistical and administrative support of Beacon Hill Friends House, Meetings across the Quarter held gatherings that ranged in programming. For example, there was an information session about Lucy Stone: presented by storyteller and historian Merrill Kohlhofer, around the question "can Lucy Stone's life shape our living today" One gathering explored the nature of Leadings and how they are supported. The final gathering, May 19, 2024 - held at Friends Meeting at Cambridge asked the question: "*After almost two years of Salem Quarter's Sabbath time, this space of Holy experimentation, how is*

*Salem Quarter Sabbath Planning Committee outreach to members of the Salem Quarter*

*Spirit moving through our communities? What is giving life? Is there anything we feel led to share with other Friends beyond our individual Meetings?"* The Sabbath Committee that guided the proposal for this period was expected to reconvene and pull the threads of this period together.

During the Sabbath time, bodies of NEYM assumed critical functions of the Quarter. The Legacy Gifts Committee faithfully stewarded the Salem Quarter Funds and used them to recharge the Legacy Futures Fund. Permanent Board oversaw the lifting up into fellowship of a new Monthly Meeting in the Quarter, the first since Fresh Pond was set off in the late 20th C. It seems that the work before us is not to "resurrect" Salem Quarter, as it was, but maybe to discern the right next incremental step of solving the specific problem of Salem Quarter being in an undefined state. At the time of this writing, the hope is that a way forward will emerge as we continue to listen to what is needed.

To: The Permanent Board of New England Yearly Meeting of Friends  
From: Noah Bishop Merrill, Yearly Meeting Secretary, Putney (VT) Friends Meeting  
Re: Report in preparation for PB meeting on December 13, 2025.

Dear Friends,

The snow has fallen heavily in southern Vermont in recent days, and the temperatures at night have dipped below zero. In this season—of darkness, of waiting and watching, of crying out, of expectation of new life and hope—I look forward prayerfully to our time together at our upcoming meeting.

Below are some updates on particular areas I felt would merit particular note in this written report. As always, I welcome your questions and insights on any aspect of our work together.

### **Witness for Religious Freedom**

While there are no major updates to report in the progress of our case against the Department of Homeland Security's infringement on religious liberty and the wellbeing of our migrant neighbors, meetings continue to seek advice and resources, including legal counsel, regarding how they are seeking the wellbeing of our migrant neighbors. I have consulted with or assisted several meetings in recent months as they have clarified their plans for responding to a variety of challenging scenarios that might arise in relation to these matters.

We have seen a particular rise in meetings choosing to post a notice graphic created by NEYM on the doors or entryways to their meeting places, making clear that their site is protected from new immigration enforcement practices by a continuing federal injunction. Along with the graphic notices, we have shared the actual text of the order putting in place the injunction, so that meetings will have it on hand should it need to be produced. Please contact me to request further information if you would like it.

### **Ministry & Eldership Resource Group**

I am deeply grateful for the leadership and grounded convening of Janet Hough, in her role as M&C Clerk, in ably shepherding the first steps of this new resource group, which I hope Friends will recall is intended to focus intensively on nurturing the capacity of local meetings to encourage, support, and hold accountable Friends carrying gifts of ministry and/or eldership in their local meetings.

The goal of this effort is not to create a single standard or practice of support for Friends in such service, but to help to share the treasure of experiences among meetings, and to walk with and provide assistance to meetings engaging with these kinds of questions and possibilities. The very strong attendance of Friends from across the Yearly Meeting at the workshop focused on these questions at the recent Meeting Care Day is, I believe, a powerful encouragement to this work, and an affirmation that Friends and meetings are ripe—and feeling a need—for the discerned work with which this resource group has been charged. Relatedly, this fall I have been part of a series of visits to, talks at, and calls with local meetings about (broadly) Friends' experience with and

practice of nurturing gifts of ministry and eldership and their exercise in the local meeting.

## **Development and Relationship**

As the Board is aware, in recent months development and relationship-strengthening have been an increasingly significant aspect of my activities and attention. Working closely with Michael Wajda, staff colleagues, and other Friends, we have invested energy particularly in the following areas:

- In recent months, we have formed and launched the “Living Stream Travel Team” to visit local meetings throughout the coming year and beyond. This continues to be enlivening, relational work.

In late August, we held a successful in-person “launch” retreat to frame the work, discern next steps, and prepare ourselves for this initiative. This team is being led initially by Michael and myself, with coordination and management from Elizabeth Hacala in her newly expanded (as of October 1) role of *Operations Director*. Frederick Martin has also been an invaluable support to these efforts in his role as Accounts Manager, as have Sara Hubner and Nia Thomas.

So far we have visited Wellesley, Mount Toby, and Westerly Meetings, and have scheduled or are in the process of scheduling several more opportunities with meetings across the whole geography of our region for the coming months.

Overall, feedback from meetings has been very positive and helpful to the team in learning and adjusting the presentation and visit approach to be more engaging, informative, and helpful to local meetings in their context and season of meeting life. We are reminded how much our common life as Friends is nourished and unfolds simply through opportunities to worship and share together. I am deeply grateful that this initiative is being so well received, including for how many meetings have expressed excitement and interest in our visiting.

**To further invite and inform PB’s oversight and awareness of this work, on December 13 we will be sharing with the Board a version of the presentation we have offered at meetings so far, requesting the Board’s awareness, questions, feedback, and guidance as we continue to learn as we go.**

- Substantial outreach and communication efforts—as well as Friends’ generous responses through financial and other gifts—in the last quarter of fiscal year 2025 brought us close to our ambitious fundraising goal from individuals and households, and together we exceeded our budgeted goal for contributions from monthly meetings. More information on these results appears in the **preliminary statement of activities** included in the advance documents. I will speak further to the end of fiscal year report, its context, and its implications at our upcoming meeting.

- Michael, Elizabeth and I are working to more clearly establish a donor gift table for our annual fund, and focusing on specific areas where our annual fundraising cycle of efforts might be adjusted and improved.
- In conversations with groups and individuals, we have continued to hear from Friends, and continue to season, our work in process to establish mission-focused funds to support key aspects of our enduring ministries in the long term. More on this, including some potential recommendations, at our February meeting.

## **Programs**

Please see the separate report in these advance documents on this fall's Meeting Care Day, prepared by Nia Thomas and Elizabeth Hacala. I believe this offers an energizing and clear window into how our efforts in recent years have made the thriving of our local meetings central to our programmatic offering. You will also hear more about ongoing programming in the presentation from the Living Stream Travel Team, so I won't repeat that here.

## **Personnel Policy**

For the past several years, through COVID and the many other storms and shifts in priorities and needs for our work, Friends have been endeavoring to make slow but meaningful progress in a revision of the NEYM personnel policies, which have not been fully reviewed and approved since 2016 as a full corpus, though many smaller changes in policy and practice have occurred. This is an item I would classify as important, and yet not as urgent as some of our other efforts have been.

I am deeply grateful for the work of Sara Hubner, Jackie Stillwell, Susan Davies, Bob Murray, Dulany Bennett, Anna Hopkins and Robb Spivey on behalf of Friends Camp, as well as the whole YM staff for your insights and participation in what has been a stop-and-start process. I am also grateful to be able to present to you in these advance documents a new draft Personnel Policy for your awareness, review, questions, and suggestions. With these, as well as another round of consultation with staff and those charged with personnel responsibilities on behalf of Friends Camp, I hope to be able to bring back a final proposed set of personnel policies for Permanent Board's consideration and approval at our February 2026 meeting.

Note: In the draft appearing in the advance documents, some sections appear in *italics*. These sections, while largely reflecting current or past approved policy, seem as if they require further seasoning and discernment before their specific language will be brought back for approval by the Board. In each case, in the process of review we have identified what could be seen as gaps in equity or parity, lack of clarity, or the possibility that the Yearly Meeting might consider making a more substantial change to how and to whom we offer certain benefits. We do not expect to have those matters fully settled by February; our intention is to ask PB to approve the policy overall, noting that those areas remain under discernment.

## **Sessions**

As you may well imagine, the Sessions site search for 2026 has been a key focus of work for many in the past few months. The NEYM December email newsletter contains an update on this search, informing Friends of where we are, what we know, and what we don't yet know. I am deeply grateful to Elizabeth Hacala, Kristin Wilson, Phil Veatch, and Nia Thomas, as well as many others, for their persistence and commitment to our finding the right place for Sessions 2026 within such a short timeframe. As we affirmed in the recent update, we are getting close to a decision, and will inform Friends just as soon as we are able, knowing that confirming the dates is especially important for Friends making summer plans, especially families with young children. More very, very soon.

### **Quarterly Meetings**

In addition to the ongoing and intentional efforts led by the Clerk of the Permanent Board to convene Friends in servant leadership roles on behalf of their quarterly meetings, this fall I visited and offered a message or program at Northwest and Dover Quarterly Meetings. I hope that my visiting can further contribute to our shared efforts to engage, celebrate, and support the thriving of quarterly meetings across our region.

I'm grateful for the plans coming together for a Quarterly Meeting Visioning Day on April 11, which promises to further advance these important efforts.

### **Wider and integrated service**

In November, Jackie Stillwell and I traveled to Cuba Yearly Meeting as representatives from NEYM (and I also of FWCC-Section of the Americas) to participate in the celebrations of 125 years of Quaker presence and ministry in Cuba. I hope to offer a brief further reflection on this experience at our meeting. When asked for a summary of my experience there, I have said it was intense, joyful, inspiring, and heartbreaking. Part of our hope in visiting with Cuban Friends was for me and Jackie to be able to bring back to NEYM insights into the condition of Cuban Friends, and how we might help strengthen the Puente de Amigos relationship now and looking ahead, something that has been a fervent hope both for the Puente de Amigos Committee of NEYM and of Coordinating & Advisory Committee for some time, and which seems ripe for fruitful engagement now. Another key hope was to accompany and offer support and encouragement to servant leaders in Cuba Yearly Meeting, something we are grateful to have been able to realize to some extent in a whirlwind mobile celebration in the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Melissa.

A reminder that in April, God willing, I will deliver the annual Perkins Family Lecture at Earlham School of Religion, with a focus on the future of Friends. My understanding is that this address will be available in-person at Earlham School of Religion, streamed live, and as a recording. My prayer in preparation, drawing on the words of our dear Friend Christopher McCandless, is that what I am given to offer "might be of some use" to Friends as we together navigate the stormy seas of these times so full of anxiety as well as possibility.

I continue to serve as a member of the Friends World Committee for Consultation Executive Committee for the Section of the Americas, where I am seeking to make a useful contribution to the vital work of relationship across linguistic, cultural, political, and theological landscapes.

A reminder to Friends that our Program Director Nia Thomas is also working closely with FWCC, as the program evaluation lead and a part of the team offering the new Quaker Connect program (through a secondment agreement where a portion of her NEYM staff time is subsidized by FWCC through grant funds). With joy I can share that Cobscook (ME) Friends Meeting is the first NEYM-affiliated meeting to be selected as a partner in this international effort to support thriving and experimentation in local meetings. I hope that in the coming months other meetings will be able to learn more about this innovative program and benefit from our connections and involvement with it at all levels as New England Friends.

I have been asked and have agreed to serve as part of a support committee to FUM leadership as Friends United Meeting navigates an especially difficult and challenging season, with significant budget shortfalls and questions about the future of the organization and the ministries we together make possible through it. I continue to meet regularly with Friends serving in leadership roles in other Friends organizations; I experience these opportunities as mutually enlivening, and especially vital in these turbulent and polarizing times.

In faith and service,



Noah

Noah Bishop\* Merrill  
Secretary  
New England Yearly Meeting of Friends

*\*A personal note and explanation: As part of our marriage process under the care of Putney Meeting, Honor Woodrow and I felt led to change both of our names to include "Bishop Merrill". "Bishop" is the surname with which I was born, and we feel our making this change together is a way to remember and visibly honor our relationships with my brother Justin Bishop, as we approach the second anniversary of his murder this January. Please feel free to refer to me simply as "Noah Merrill" or as "Noah Bishop Merrill" going forward, as you find easiest.*

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
DISTRICT OF MARYLAND

PHILADELPHIA YEARLY MEETING OF  
THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS,  
NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING OF  
THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS,  
BALTIMORE YEARLY MEETING OF THE  
RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS, INC.,  
ADELPHI FRIENDS MEETING OF THE  
RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS,  
RICHMOND FRIENDS MEETING OF THE  
RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS,  
NEW YORK YEARLY MEETING OF THE  
RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS, INC.,  
COOPERATIVE BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP  
and  
SIKH TEMPLE SACRAMENTO,

Plaintiffs,

v.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF  
HOMELAND SECURITY and  
KRISTI NOEM, *in her official capacity as  
Secretary of Homeland Security*,

Defendants.

Civil Action No. 25-0243-TDC

**PRELIMINARY INJUNCTION**

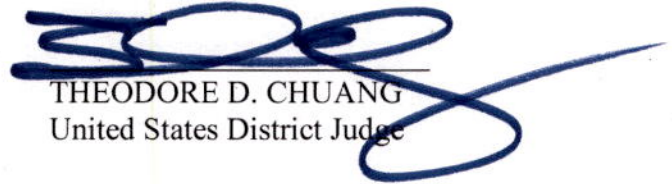
For the reasons set forth in the accompanying Memorandum Opinion and Order, which are incorporated by reference, it is hereby ORDERED that:

1. Defendants the United States Department of Homeland Security (“DHS”) and Kristi Noem, in her official capacity as Secretary of Homeland Security; DHS component agencies, including but not limited to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (“ICE”) and U.S. Customs and Border Protection (“CBP”); all officers, agents, employees, and appointees of DHS and its component agencies; and all other persons who are in active concert and participation with them (collectively, “Defendants”), are ENJOINED as follows:

- a. In relation to all potential or actual immigration enforcement actions in or near any place of worship owned, operated, occupied, or used by one or more of the above-captioned Plaintiffs or their agents, employees, or members, as specified on a list to be provided by Plaintiffs, Defendants shall not implement, enforce, apply, or act pursuant to the terms of the Memorandum of January 20, 2025 from the Acting Secretary of Homeland Security entitled "Enforcement Actions in or Near Protected Areas," or the terms of the Memorandum of January 31, 2025 from the Acting Director of ICE entitled "Common Sense Enforcement Actions in or Near Protected Areas."
  - b. In relation to all potential or actual immigration enforcement actions in or near any place of worship owned, operated, occupied, or used by one or more of the above-captioned Plaintiffs or their agents, employees, or members, as specified on a list to be provided by Plaintiffs, Defendants shall instead implement, enforce, apply, and act pursuant to the terms of the Memorandum of October 27, 2021 from the Secretary of Homeland Security entitled "Guidelines for Enforcement Actions in or Near Protected Areas," a copy of which is attached hereto as Exhibit A, including but not limited to the requirements that (1) immigration enforcement actions at places of worship shall not be undertaken "to the fullest extent possible"; (2) such enforcement actions shall occur only in circumstances identical to or comparable to the enumerated "limited circumstances"; (3) such enforcement actions shall occur only with prior approval of ICE or CBP headquarters or with post-action consultation in the event of exigent circumstances that prevented such prior approval; and (4) to the fullest extent possible, any enforcement action in or near a place of worship shall be taken in a non-public area, outside of public view, and be otherwise conducted to eliminate or at least minimize the chance that the enforcement action will restrain people from accessing the place of worship. *See* Ex. A § III.
  - c. Consistent with 8 U.S.C. § 1252(f)(1), this injunction does not enjoin or restrict Defendants from conducting arrests in or near places of worship when authorized by an administrative or judicial warrant.
2. As necessary for enforcement of the Preliminary Injunction, Plaintiffs shall provide to Defendants immediately, and in any event no later than three days after the date of this Order, a list consisting of the names and addresses of all places of worship that are owned, operated, occupied, or used by any Plaintiff or its agents, employees, or members.
  3. Pursuant to Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 65(c), Plaintiffs are required to post with this Court a bond of \$100.
  4. The Preliminary Injunction shall take effect upon completion of both (1) the posting of the bond; and (2) the transmission to Defendants of the list of Plaintiffs' places of worship.

Violations of this Preliminary Injunction shall subject Defendants and all other persons bound by this Order to all applicable penalties, including contempt of court.

Date: February 24, 2025



THEODORE D. CHUANG  
United States District Judge

By Federal court order  
immigration enforcement  
**is restricted**  
within or near  
this place of worship

We honor the dignity of all migrants

All without weapons are  
welcome to worship with us



NEW ENGLAND  
QUAKERS

# Yearly Meeting Personnel Policies

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## INTRODUCTION

New England Yearly Meeting of Friends connects the people of the Religious Society of Friends across the six New England states. The Yearly Meeting is both a denominational decision-making body and a regional organization supporting shared ministries. New England Yearly Meeting supports and strengthens a vibrant and growing web of monthly meetings, quarterly meetings, and other Friends communities under our care, helping us do together what we cannot do alone. In all our work, we strive to obey the promptings of the Spirit to bring healing, wholeness, and transformation to ourselves and to the world.

The Yearly Meeting employs a number of people as staff to carry out and support the shared ministries of Friends. This document serves as the authoritative, public reference for current Permanent-Board-approved personnel policies, as well as for procedures and practices following from these policies. It provides guidelines and expectations for the working relationship between paid staff and the organization of the Yearly Meeting to guide all involved in their work.

The Yearly Meeting strives to draw out the right exercise of God's gifts in each employee as it pertains to their job in the Yearly Meeting and to their professional, personal, and spiritual growth, and to hold them accountable for the faithful exercise of these gifts.

In its structure and policies, the Yearly Meeting seeks to provide fair working conditions that support paid employees in doing their best work. Together, those in both paid and unpaid service through Yearly Meeting have both a responsibility and an opportunity to further God's work in the world.

More important than the specific arrangements outlined below—which may change as needed—is our degree of caring for each other, our willingness to work in harmony with one another, and our ability to be open to the leadings of the Holy Spirit.

The Permanent Board has ultimate responsibility for personnel matters on behalf of the Yearly Meeting. The Yearly Meeting Secretary, in consultation with the Personnel Advisory Group, presents recommendations to the Permanent Board for changes to personnel policies. The Yearly Meeting Secretary has overall responsibility for implementing personnel policies, and for management and supervision of staff. (See [neym.org/who/governance/how-we-do-things](http://neym.org/who/governance/how-we-do-things) for a diagram of the Yearly Meeting organization.)

The Yearly Meeting conducts business as a “General Division” (formerly called “Operating Division”) with an official office in Worcester, Massachusetts; and a division known as “Friends Camp,” a residential camp facility in China, Maine. Friends Camp is a

wholly owned, though not separately incorporated, division of the Yearly Meeting under the oversight of the Camp Committee and the Permanent Board.

Due to the distance and the complexity of camp operations, the management of the Camp is the responsibility of the Friends Camp Director (“the Camp Director”). Oversight of the Camp is delegated to the Friends Camp Committee appointed by the Yearly Meeting, and the Yearly Meeting Secretary (“the Secretary”). The Yearly Meeting General Division and Friends Camp work together toward shared goals, often with overlapping efforts and constituents.

The New England Yearly Meeting personnel policy applies to the Friends Camp Director, while separate policies govern the Friends Camp (temporary) part-time and seasonal staff. The Friends Camp personnel policies are maintained in accordance with Maine state youth camp licensing requirements and the American Camp Association requirements.

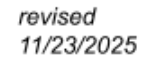
This policy document defines who we are and how we work together. We will do everything possible to create a fair and productive workplace, but we need your help—as employees, Friends serving in governance roles, volunteers, and everyone else. We’ve created this document to guide us in our shared service.

This document isn’t a contract or a guarantee of employment. It’s a collection of our expectations, commitments, responsibilities, and board-approved policies. Please read these policies carefully and consult them whenever you need to.

If you have questions, comments, or concerns, please contact the Yearly Meeting Secretary at [ymsec@neym.org](mailto:ymsec@neym.org)



NEW ENGLAND  
YEARLY MEETING  
— OF FRIENDS —  
QUAKERS



# **I. EMPLOYMENT BASICS**

## **A. Employee Status Definitions**

### **1. Executive Staff**

New England Yearly Meeting currently has two executive staff positions hired by Yearly Meeting Sessions: the Yearly Meeting Secretary (“the Secretary”) and the Friends Camp Director (“the Camp Director”). These employees are hired by the Yearly Meeting in Sessions, upon recommendation of the Permanent Board. Their work is outlined in job descriptions approved by the Permanent Board. These two full-time staff positions have more global responsibility for supervision of other staff members and are referred to as “executive staff” within this document.

### **2. Administrative and Program Staff**

Administrative and Program Staff of the General Division are hired to meet specific needs of the Yearly Meeting and work under the overall supervision of the Yearly Meeting Secretary. The Program Director is responsible for the day-to-day supervision of the program staff. All Friends Camp Staff report to the Friends Camp Director.

For the General Division, each staff member’s work is outlined in a job description reviewed and revised on a periodic basis, amended to reflect current needs to accomplish the Yearly Meeting’s work, and approved by the Secretary. Current job descriptions should include a date of last revision, and be posted to the NEYM Website.

### **3. Regular and Temporary Definitions**

*Regular* employees are employed in an ongoing arrangement, under the terms outlined in this policy and an Appointment Letter. All other employees are considered *Temporary*. Temporary employees generally work for a specified period, usually on a short-term basis such as for seasonal work, acting in an interim capacity, or on a specific project or internship.

With the exception of the Friends Camp Director, employees of Friends Camp (including seasonal employees such as camp counselors, cooks, etc., as well as staff employed year-round but for a specified term) are considered temporary employees of New England Yearly Meeting of Friends, regardless of hours worked. These employees of Friends Camp are supervised by the Friends Camp Director, and their employment is subject to the terms of their employment contract with Friends Camp, rather than the details further described in these policies.

### **4. Full- and Part-Time Definitions**

*Full-Time* employees are generally expected to work an average of 40 hours per week. All other employees are considered *Part-Time*.

In general, Regular Full-Time employees are salaried (Fair Labor Standards Act exempt) and receive full benefits as defined below (see page 19). All other employees may be subject to limitations on benefits as described below in the section on benefits definitions and ultimately determined in each case by the terms of the initial Appointment Letter or subsequent written updates to the terms of employment.

## **5. Individuals Not Holding Employee Status**

### **a. Contractors**

Contractors (also sometimes called “consultants”) are individuals or firms performing specific work for the Yearly Meeting and are hired by the Secretary (or Camp Director, in the case of Friends Camp). Contractors are not employees of the Yearly Meeting. In each instance, it is the Secretary (or Camp Director, in the case of Friends Camp) who will review potential contractors or consultants, make the final selection of contractors to engage, determine in writing the scope of work to be performed, estimated time required for completion, associated fees, specific deliverables, and when the agreed work has been performed satisfactorily so that payment can be made. Often this work will be done in consultation with relevant committees or other Friends with relevant experience and expertise. The Accounts Manager will issue a Form 1099 to contractors consistent with IRS regulations.

### **b. Volunteers**

Some individuals serving on behalf of the Yearly Meeting in primarily volunteer capacities may enter an arrangement of service to the Yearly Meeting whereby they receive some modest compensation, for example, stipends, honoraria, waived registration fees, or room and board at Yearly Meeting events. These individuals are not employees of the Yearly Meeting and are not eligible for benefits.

## **B. Diversity and Non-Discrimination**

New England Yearly Meeting encourages diversity in applications for employment and will not discriminate in the appointment of employees on the basis of race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or national origin; however, preference may be given to members of the Religious Society of Friends.

## **C. Recruitment and Appointment**

When an executive position is to be filled, it is customary that the Yearly Meeting at Annual Sessions formally appoints the Secretary or the Camp Director upon recommendation of the Permanent Board. If necessary, the Permanent Board has authority to appoint these positions between Yearly Meeting Sessions. Other staff positions will be appointed by the Secretary or Friends Camp Director (as appropriate), within budgetary limits, in consultation and with input from relevant committees, staff, and other constituencies.

### **1. Basis of Consideration**

The initial consideration of applicants will be based on a letter of interest and current resume demonstrating qualifications and experience that fulfill the written job description.

### **2. Announcement of Position Availability**

All current employees will be notified of any vacant position by formal or informal announcement.

## **D. Search Process**

### **1. Executive Staff**

When the Secretary or Camp Director position becomes vacant, or is expected to become vacant soon, a Search Committee is appointed.

In the case of the Secretary, the Coordinating and Advisory Committee (C&A) should consider whether the appointment of an interim Secretary would be the better option. If so, a nomination for an interim Secretary may be brought forward by C&A for approval by the Permanent Board. If C&A is led to move forward with a permanent appointment, C&A in consultation with the Nominating Committee shall recommend five to seven Friends as members of the Search Committee for approval by the Permanent Board.

Efforts should be made to select a group that reflects the diversity of the Yearly Meeting and includes members with significant experience relevant to a search for executive leadership. The Search Committee shall include at least one member of the Permanent Board. At least one member shall have significant human resources experience. This latter person shall take responsibility for ensuring a good search process and communication with candidates. Before the formal search process begins, the Search Committee should present to the Permanent Board a recommended plan and timeline for the search process, for review and approval by the Permanent Board.

In the case of the Camp Director, in addition to C&A and the Nominating Committee, the Friends Camp Committee clerk will also be involved in appointing the Search Committee.

For either position, at least one member of the Search Committee should have professional experience in hiring processes. This person shall take responsibility for ensuring a good search process and communication with candidates.

The Search Committee for either position shall bring to the Permanent Board a recommendation of a single candidate. If the Permanent Board approves this recommended candidate, the Permanent Board Clerk shall inform Sessions.

In some cases, the appointment of an Acting Secretary or Acting Camp Director may be needed because of sabbatical, illness, parental leave, suspension, or termination. In the case of the Secretary, C&A (including the Secretary as appropriate) will recommend to the Permanent Board one or more Friends to serve as Acting Secretary for the needed term. In the case of the Camp Director, the Camp Committee clerk, the clerk of the Permanent Board, the Camp Director (as appropriate), and the Secretary will meet to select an Acting Camp Director. The appointment of an Acting Camp Director will be approved by the Permanent Board.

## **2. Administrative and Program Staff**

To fill an Administrative or Program Staff vacancy, the Secretary will conduct a search and administer the hiring process, in consultation with the Personnel Advisory Group as needed and with the input of relevant parties. In some cases, the Secretary may choose to adjust or redistribute the responsibilities of existing staff, removing the need for a search process.

### **E. Hiring Process**

Upon approval of an appointment by the Permanent Board:

For the Secretary: With staff support, the clerk of the Permanent Board will prepare an Appointment Letter to be signed by the clerk of the Permanent Board and the future Secretary.

For the Camp Director: With staff support, the clerk of the Permanent Board will prepare an Appointment Letter. The clerk of the Camp Committee, the clerk of the Permanent Board, and the future Camp Director will sign the Camp Director Appointment Letter.

Original copies of the Appointment Letter and the Employee Information Form are filed in the employee's permanent personnel file. The Secretary shall ensure these documents are filed, with access restricted to the supervisor, the employee, and those with a board-authorized need to access such information in the interests of the Yearly Meeting. Employees shall be made aware of all documents to be included in their permanent personnel files.

Administrative and Program staff who are Regular Full- or Part-Time employees will receive an initial Appointment Letter prepared by the Secretary. The Appointment Letter will include the initial rate of pay and will enumerate the benefits provided to the staff member. A copy of this letter will be filed in the employee's personnel file by the Secretary. In the case of significant changes in responsibilities, compensation, or benefits (beyond changes such as COLA affecting all employees) the secretary will create an updated employment letter to be signed by both the Secretary and the employee.

Temporary employees will receive from the Secretary or Camp Director a letter of employment that lists projects, expectations, rate of pay, and the term of their employment.

Contractors will receive from the Secretary or Camp Director a memorandum of understanding describing the work they are accountable for, their rate of pay, as well as appropriate milestones and deliverables and estimated completion date. An approved estimate or proposal from the contractor or consultant may also serve this purpose.

Following appointment to the general division (or in the case of the appointment of a new Camp Director), the Secretary or their designee shall provide new employees with an orientation to their new role, including completion of any necessary documentation and election of benefits.

## II. WORKPLACE POLICIES

### A. Child Safety

Individuals being considered for staff positions within the Yearly Meeting will provide information and consent for a personal criminal background check before the hiring process can be completed.

Anyone who may have contact with youth in the course of their duties on behalf of the Yearly Meeting, including all paid staff, should familiarize themselves with the Yearly Meeting Child Safety Policy published on the Yearly Meeting website ([neym.org/child-safety-policy-0](http://neym.org/child-safety-policy-0)) and should know what is required of them to comply with that policy.

### B. Harassment

Harassment of any kind is unacceptable to the Yearly Meeting. It is inconsistent with our testimony and does not support the work environment we hope to create for our employees. Complaints of harassment made by a Yearly Meeting staff member will be responded to in a serious and timely way and may lead to sanctions, up to and including termination of employment of the offending party if they are an employee. Complaints of harassment perpetrated by other members of our community will initiate a process designed to protect our staff from such behaviors.

Harassment is any conduct—verbal, electronic, or physical—that has the intent or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work performance or that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment. This conduct could also include indirect actions such as inciting conflict or spreading unverified information or rumors. Harassment on the basis of race, ethnicity, sex, ability, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, veteran's status, or age may also be illegal. This includes harassment of an individual in terms of a stereotyped group characteristic, or because of that person's identification with a particular group. (Please see *Section II C, Sexual Harassment*, for the Yearly Meeting policy regarding sexual harassment in particular.)

Retaliation of any kind against an individual who has complained about harassment, and retaliation against individuals for cooperating with an investigation of a harassment complaint, will not be tolerated by the Yearly Meeting.

The Yearly Meeting is committed to stopping harassment and associated retaliatory behavior. All Yearly Meeting supervisors have a responsibility to act to stop harassment in the areas under their supervision. Any Yearly Meeting staff member who feels harassed is encouraged to seek assistance and resolution of the complaint. The Yearly Meeting’s procedures for dealing with harassment complaints are intended to protect the rights of both complainant and respondent, though priority will be given to ensuring a complainant employee is able to accomplish their responsibilities in service to the Yearly

Meeting. Throughout any such process, it is the intention of the Yearly Meeting to protect privacy, and to prevent retaliation by the supervisor or others.

### **1. Complaints of Harassment**

If any of our employees believes that they have been subjected to harassment as defined in this policy, the employee has the right to file a complaint with our organization. This may be done in writing or orally. An employee may file a complaint by contacting the Secretary, or in the case of a complaint concerning the Secretary, by contacting the clerk of the Permanent Board. The filing of a complaint must be documented in writing by the person receiving the complaint.

### **2. Harassment Investigation**

When the responsible party receives a complaint, they will promptly notify the Clerk of the Permanent Board (or, in the case of allegations concerning the Secretary or the Permanent Board Clerk, the Presiding Clerk). The responsible party will then investigate the allegation in a fair and expeditious manner. While they hold overall responsibility for responding to the complaint, the Secretary or the clerk of the Permanent Board may delegate the investigation process to an appropriate third party (such as an attorney or other person experienced in investigating and responding to harassment concerns).

The investigation will be conducted in such a way as to maintain confidentiality to the extent practicable under the circumstances. The investigation will include individual private interviews with the person raising the complaint, with any witnesses, and to the extent appropriate with the person or persons alleged to have committed the harassment. When the investigation is completed, the investigator will, to the extent appropriate, inform the person filing the complaint and the person alleged to have committed the conduct of the results of that investigation. The investigator will also make a report to the clerk of the Permanent Board and/or the Presiding Clerk. The investigation process will be documented in writing.

If it is determined that conduct corresponding to the above definition of harassment has occurred, the Yearly Meeting will act promptly to eliminate the offending conduct, and where it is appropriate, will impose disciplinary action. Conduct not determined to correspond with the above definition of harassment, but which creates or results in ongoing conflict, may be referred to others to assist with resolution and further care, in consultation with the parties involved.

### **3. Disciplinary Actions**

If it is determined that inappropriate conduct has been committed by a Yearly Meeting employee, the Secretary (or clerk of the Permanent Board) will take such action as they deem appropriate under the circumstances. Such action may range

from counseling to termination of employment, and may include other forms of disciplinary or corrective action.

If the inappropriate conduct toward an employee has been committed by a person who is not an employee of the Yearly Meeting, the Secretary (or clerk of the Permanent Board) may wish to involve others to support their discernment and response. These might include, but not be limited to, the members of the Coordinating & Advisory Committee, and/or Friends in the local meeting of the person acting inappropriately. In each case, the Secretary (or clerk of the Permanent Board) will determine and implement what they deem to be the appropriate response.

The disciplinary action or other appropriate response will be documented in writing.

#### **4. State and Federal Remedies**

In addition to the above, if an employee believes they have been subjected to harassment, they may file a formal complaint with any of the government agencies listed below. Using the Yearly Meeting's complaint process does not prohibit an employee from filing a complaint with these agencies. Please note that each of the agencies below may have a short time period for filing a claim (for instance, EEOC is 300 days; MCAD, 6 months).

The United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC),  
<https://www.eeoc.gov/field-office/boston/location>

The Massachusetts Commission against Discrimination (MCAD),  
<https://www.mass.gov/locations/mcad-boston-headquarters>

Vermont Human Rights Commission, <https://hrc.vermont.gov/>

Maine Human Rights Commission, <https://www.maine.gov/mhrc/mhrc/home>

Rhode Island Commission on Human Rights, <http://www.richr.ri.gov/>

New Hampshire Commission for Human Rights, Industrial Park Drive, Bldg One,  
<https://www.humanrights.nh.gov/>

Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities,  
<https://portal.ct.gov/CHRO>

## C. Sexual Harassment

Each New England state has passed a specific law prohibiting sexual harassment. While varying on specific employee notification and training requirements, each does require employers to notify employees of the illegality of sexual harassment and to include a procedure for reporting sexual harassment.

It is the goal of New England Yearly Meeting to promote a workplace that is free of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment of employees occurring in the workplace, or in other settings in which employees may find themselves in connection with their employment, is unlawful and will not be tolerated. Any retaliation against an individual who has complained about sexual harassment or retaliation against individuals cooperating with an investigation of a sexual harassment complaint is similarly unlawful and will not be tolerated by the Yearly Meeting. This policy provides a procedure by which inappropriate conduct will be dealt with if encountered by employees.

Because New England Yearly Meeting takes allegations of sexual harassment seriously, we will respond promptly to complaints of sexual harassment, and where it is determined that such inappropriate conduct has occurred, we will act promptly to eliminate the conduct and impose such corrective action as is necessary, including disciplinary or legal action where appropriate.

### 1. Definition of Sexual Harassment

In Massachusetts, the legal definition for sexual harassment is this:

*“sexual harassment” means sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and verbal, electronic, or physical conduct of a sexual nature when: submission to or rejection of such advances, request, or conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly as a term or condition of employment or as a basis for employment decisions; or, such advances, requests, or conduct have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or sexually offensive work environment.*

For the purposes of this policy, we will use this definition for the discussion of sexual harassment in all the states in which Yearly Meeting operates.

Under this definition of sexual harassment, direct or implied requests by a supervisor for sexual favors in exchange for actual or promised job benefits, such as favorable reviews, salary increases, promotions, increased benefits, or continued employment, constitutes sexual harassment. The legal definition of sexual harassment is broad and, in addition to the above examples, includes other sexually oriented conduct, whether or not it is intended. Conduct that has the effect of creating a workplace environment

that is hostile, offensive, intimidating, or humiliating to workers may also constitute sexual harassment.

While it is not possible to list all those additional circumstances that may constitute sexual harassment, the following are some examples of conduct which, if unwelcome, may constitute sexual harassment, depending upon the totality of the circumstances including the severity of the conduct and its pervasiveness: unwelcome sexual advances, whether or not they involve physical touching; sexual epithets, jokes, written or oral references to sexual conduct; gossip regarding one's sex life; comment on an individual's body; comment about an individual's sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess; displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, cartoons; unwelcome leering, whistling, brushing against the body, sexual gestures, suggestive or insulting comments; inquiries into one's sexual experiences; and discussion of one's sexual activities.

## **2. Complaints of Sexual Harassment**

If any employee believes that they have been subjected to sexual harassment, the employee has the right to file a complaint. This may be done in writing or orally.

The process for filing a complaint, the investigation of the complaint, and the possible disciplinary actions that might be taken are the same as those in Section II, Paragraph B, Harassment.

## **D. Interpersonal Conflict**

Our faith as Friends calls us to care for each other, to work in harmony with one another, and to be open to the leadings of the Holy Spirit. However, interpersonal conflicts may arise, which with patient and genuine effort may be resolved to the satisfaction of all involved.

Disagreements that persist between employees shall first be addressed with their direct supervisors (if applicable), and subsequently by the Secretary. If the conflict cannot be resolved by these steps, further support may be requested from the C&A Committee, which may delegate this work to a smaller group.

## **E. Confidentiality and Data Protection**

We recognize that Friends and Friends meetings' decision to share data is founded on a precious trust placed in us as we serve our faith communities, and we make every effort to sustain that trust.

In the course of their service, employees will gain knowledge of personal situations, conflicts in meetings, and other private matters affecting the wellbeing of persons, families, and the wider community. This sensitive information should as a rule be kept in

strict confidence, except as necessary for informing the employee's supervisor or other persons charged with responding to such concerns, and for legally mandated reporting. Any questions regarding expectations of confidentiality, responsibility, and information-sharing by employees, should be directed to the Secretary.

Employees are to familiarize themselves with the Yearly Meeting Data Privacy Policy posted on the Yearly Meeting website ([neym.org/data-privacy-policy](https://neym.org/data-privacy-policy)) and comply with its provisions. Employees are to use secure "strong" passwords for their access to all Yearly Meeting applications (e.g., Salesforce), email, and other accounts. Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA), passkeys, or other additional security measures may be required in some cases; employees will be informed of such situations.

#### **E. Email Policy**

The Yearly Meeting policy on email, posted on the Yearly Meeting website ([neym.org/email-usage-policy](https://neym.org/email-usage-policy)) applies to both staff and volunteers who have been issued email accounts hosted under the Yearly Meeting domain name (neym.org) who send and receive email messages in the course of their work for the Yearly Meeting.

### **III. COMPENSATION**

#### **A. Salary and Hourly Compensation**

The Yearly Meeting desires to pay salaries commensurate with job responsibilities, experience, and performance, and responsive to current economic conditions. Where possible, compensation ranges for positions should reflect some degree of parity with roles with similar levels of responsibility in other comparable organizations, based on periodic benchmarking.

The Yearly Meeting strives to provide annual cost-of-living adjustments (COLA) to the compensation paid to its year-round employees. The COLA is based on the Consumer Price Index—All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for the Boston metropolitan area, or for the New England region, whichever is higher, as published by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. January-to-January figures are used to determine the percentage increase as closely as possible.

Further increases in compensation for Administrative and Program Staff will be determined by the Secretary as part of performance reviews, and if recommended will be included in the budget presentation to the Finance Committee. The factors influencing such increase recommendations are performance appraisals, changes in level of responsibilities, experience, and the current resources of the Yearly Meeting.

##### **1. New Hire: Executive (Yearly Meeting Secretary and Friends Camp Director)**

The Search Committee informs candidates of the pay range approved by the Permanent Board as part of the Search Process, in consultation with Coordinating and Advisory, in the search process. The salary is negotiated between the clerk of the Permanent Board and the approved candidate, and is included in the final offer letter.

##### **2. New Hire: Administrative and Program**

Compensation for Administrative and Program Staff will be determined by the Secretary, in consultation as desired with the Personnel Advisory Group, and within the policy and budgetary constraints of the Yearly Meeting. Final compensation will be communicated to employees as part of an Appointment Letter that will be kept in the employee's personnel file.

##### **3. Continuing Staff**

Adjustments to compensation for staff are considered as part of the Yearly Meeting's annual budget process. Final approval of the annual budget rests with the Yearly Meeting.

Annual compensation for General Division staff is determined by the Secretary. The Secretary's compensation is set by the C&A Committee, without the Secretary's direct participation.

Compensation is based on consideration of four factors: base pay, Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA), other increases related to performance or responsibilities, and comparisons with compensation for similar roles in Friends or other comparable organizations.

Any changes in compensation will be communicated to employees, with substantial adjustments detailed in a letter added to the employee's personnel file.

Friends Camp temporary staff compensation is set by the Friends Camp Director within budgetary limits. The compensation for the Friends Camp Director is set by the Friends Camp Committee, considering factors such as performance appraisals, and changes in level of responsibility, cost of living, and comparable compensation for directors of similar camping programs.

## **IV. SUPERVISION AND PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS**

There shall be written job descriptions for all employees, maintained as part of the NEYM Personnel files. Summaries of current staff responsibilities should be posted on the Yearly Meeting's website, in order to make Friends familiar with those serving as staff and their current roles and responsibilities.

Job descriptions for Yearly Meeting Administrative and Program Staff will be written by the Secretary in consultation with the staff and, if the Secretary chooses, the Personnel Advisory Group.

The Secretary shall periodically, but no less than every three years, review and revise job descriptions.

Substantial revisions to the Secretary's job description will be made by Coordinating & Advisory Committee. Substantial revisions to the Camp Director's job descriptions will be made by the Friends Camp Committee. Such revisions of executive staff job descriptions must be submitted to the Permanent Board for final approval.

### **A. Supervision**

#### **1. Yearly Meeting Secretary**

The Secretary is accountable to the C&A Committee and to the Permanent Board, which delegates supervision to a qualified Friend (the Supervisor to the Yearly Meeting Secretary), nominated by the Yearly Meeting Nominating Committee (in active consultation with the Coordinating & Advisory Committee) and approved by the Permanent Board for a renewable three-year term. The Supervisor to the Secretary will have significant experience and a level of skill as a supervisor to leadership, as well as strong connections to the Yearly Meeting. The Supervisor will serve as a full member of the C&A Committee, and as an ex-officio member of the Permanent Board.

The Supervisor, with the Secretary, will regularly review the Secretary's priorities, leading, and performance, as well as its alignment with the discernment and needs of the Yearly Meeting, and will provide updates to the Coordinating & Advisory Committee.

#### **2. Friends Camp Director**

The Friends Camp Director is supervised by the Friends Camp Committee, which delegates supervision to a qualified Friend (the Supervisor of the Friends Camp Director), named by the Friends Camp Committee and approved by the Permanent Board for a renewable three-year term. The Supervisor of the Friends Camp Director will serve ex officio on the Camp Committee. The job description for the Camp

Director is developed by the Camp Committee, reviewed and modified as needed by the Yearly Meeting Secretary, and approved by the Permanent Board.

The Supervisor of the Friends Camp Director will have regular supervisory meetings with the Camp Director and will conduct or ensure the Camp Director's annual performance appraisal.

### **3. Administrative and Program Staff**

Administrative staff members are directly supervised by the Secretary; Program staff are supervised by the Program Director. For each Administrative and Program staff member, the Secretary or Program Director will:

- meet regularly with the employee to review their work and offer support and guidance
- develop, agree areas of focus with the employee
- interpret Yearly Meeting policy to the employee
- conduct periodic performance appraisals
- authorize reimbursement of appropriate expenses
- pre-authorize substantial work-related travel and conference attendance or other significant work-related expenses; and
- plan for/ensure provision of relevant and ongoing professional development and spiritual enrichment

## **B. Performance Reviews**

The performance of Regular Full-Time and Regular Part-Time employees shall be reviewed as needed, and at least once per year. Each supervisor shall facilitate these processes for those under their supervision, consistent with the guidelines below.

### **1. Administrative and Program Staff**

Each employee and their supervisor will jointly establish areas of focus for the year, including priorities and areas for growth, to aid their work together in the coming year.

### **2. Executive Staff**

Annual reviews of executive staff are facilitated by their appointed supervisors, drawing on input from relevant staff and volunteer leadership roles. Learning or decisions arising out of these reviews may also be shared with staff colleagues, the Permanent Board, or others as appropriate.

## **V. BENEFITS**

### **A. Regulated Benefits**

#### **1. Social Security and Medicare**

The Yearly Meeting will pay the employer's share of Social Security and Medicare taxes for all employees.

Eligible employees who receive a ministerial housing allowance from the Yearly Meeting are responsible for paying the portion of their Social Security and Medicare (FICA) taxes resulting from the payment of their housing allowance, which is not considered taxable income. In this case, the Yearly Meeting does not contribute Social Security or Medicare (FICA) taxes for the portion of compensation that is given as a housing allowance.

#### **2. Worker's Compensation**

The Yearly Meeting shall provide worker's compensation insurance, as required by state law.

#### **3. Unemployment Compensation**

Given its status as a church, Yearly Meeting is not legally required to pay unemployment insurance. The Yearly Meeting has elected not to do so, and therefore employees are not eligible to collect it.

### **B. Employee Benefits**

#### **1. Health Insurance**

Regular employees under contract for 30 hours per week (0.75 FTE) or more shall be eligible for health insurance coverage under the Yearly Meeting's elected plan while serving as employees of the Yearly Meeting. Currently the New England Yearly Meeting is a participant with other Friends organizations in the Friends Mutual Health Group (FMHG).

An eligible employee may state in writing that coverage from Yearly Meeting is not desired and will not receive this benefit. If an employee elects to receive coverage from Yearly Meeting, the benefit will cover a percentage of the individual, dual, or family plan premium as negotiated with FMHG. The Yearly Meeting covers 100% of the premium for eligible employees, and 80% of the premium for any dependents.

Regular Part-Time employees who work at least 30 hours per week shall have access to a pro-rated health insurance benefit. Employees working fewer than 30 hours (0.75 FTE) are not currently eligible for this benefit.

FMHG additionally offers elective dental and vision coverage, in which employees can enroll and pay for through NEYM at the current rates, via a pre-tax employee deduction.

## **2. Retirement**

NEYM provides an employer retirement plan for each Regular employee if the expected hours described in their employment letter are 20 hours per week or above. The employer contribution is 10% of the employee's annual compensation; in the case of Regular part-time employees, the percentage is based on actual hours worked, including holiday, vacation, health, and overtime pay. In addition, any employee may contribute additional money into their own retirement plan.

## **3. Health Care and Dependent Care Reimbursement**

A Regular employee who works at least 17½ hours per week may elect a pre-tax reduction in their cash compensation in order to set aside funds annually from which they may receive reimbursement for medical, dental and dependent care expenses (Federal "Section 125" or Flexible Spending Arrangement [FSA]). An employee is eligible for this benefit after six months of employment. Information regarding this benefit is available from the Accounts Manager.

## **4. Disability Insurance**

Yearly Meeting provides disability insurance for all employees who work 30 or more hours per week and are younger than 64 years and 8 months. New employees are eligible immediately, subject to the terms of the policy. Information regarding current disability insurance benefits is available from the Accounts Manager.

## **C. Office Equipment, Supplies, and Expenses**

The budget for all staff costs is developed by the Secretary, consistent with Yearly Meeting personnel policies, and in consultation with appropriate partners, as part of the annual budget process.

Reimbursements for approved expenses are made upon timely submission of documentation. In some cases, use of the staff member's Yearly Meeting-issued credit card may be more useful than the staff member paying out of pocket and then being reimbursed. In such cases, receipts and other documentation must be submitted just as it would be for a reimbursement request.

### **1. Office Equipment and Supplies**

Employees may be issued laptop computers, printers, or other devices for use in their home or remote office. This equipment remains the property of the Yearly Meeting.

Funding for paper, printer ink and toner, and other office supplies needed for working at home or remotely will be provided by the Yearly Meeting. In some cases,

and at their discretion with a caution to maintain fairness, the Secretary may authorize reimbursement for other extraordinary expenses related to maintaining a home office (for example, broadband internet). Purchases for office supplies and equipment over \$500 should be approved by the Secretary in advance of purchase.

## **2. Automobile Expenses**

When an employee's automobile is used for Yearly Meeting business travel, the expense will be reimbursed on the basis of miles traveled at the current rate for business use set by the Internal Revenue Service. Any expense related to traveling from home to the Yearly Meeting office for regularly scheduled staff meetings is not reimbursable.

If an employee needs to rent an automobile or use public transit for Yearly Meeting business travel, the expense will be reimbursed.

At the beginning of each calendar year, the Accounts Manager shall inform all employees of the mileage reimbursement rate. This rate will be posted on the Yearly Meeting website, and will be used by employees for all mileage reimbursement expense reports.

Toll expenses and other travel costs will be reimbursed upon submission of receipts.

## **3. Other Expenses**

Other reimbursable expenses consist of meals, lodging, and other living expenses incurred on approved overnight trips, and other miscellaneous approved expenses. IRS federal per diem rates will be used as a benchmark for appropriate levels of travel-related expenses.

## **E. Credit Card Use**

Any use of credit cards issued to staff is expected to conform to all policies for expenditures, including approvals prior to making expenditures if not budgeted in advance. Documentation for credit card purchases must be submitted to the Accounts Manager within one month to allow for all charges to be verified and paid in the timely manner.

## **F. Conferences**

Fees for attendance at Yearly Meeting Sessions are covered by the Yearly Meeting for all employees required to attend Sessions. Expenses for other work-related conferences will be reimbursed as above; however, participation in the conference must be approved by the supervisor and must be within the limitations of the expense budget.

## **G. Staff Development**

All staff are encouraged, as part of their annual review and in ongoing consultation with their supervisor and colleagues, to identify professional development goals. Supervisors should seek to support efforts (training, continuing education, certification, study) that both respond to an employee's passions and hopes for professional development, and which seem likely to strengthen the employee's contributions to their work on behalf of the Yearly Meeting. While initially limited to budgetary constraints, employees and supervisors are encouraged to explore potential grant funding opportunities or other measures which might make hoped-for staff development opportunities accessible. In all cases, such professional development plans should be conducted in consultation, and with the approval of, the supervisor.

## **VI. WORK HOURS, TIME BUDGETING, AND TIME OFF**

Working hours and availability for communications will be established on an individual basis and approved by the supervisor. Each employee's office hours and availability shall be conveyed to relevant constituencies. Due to the nature of the work and the regional nature of the Yearly Meeting, employees will work away from the Yearly Meeting office much of the time. Supervisors should seek to ensure that this is a satisfactory arrangement for both the employee and the Yearly Meeting.

### **A. Timesheets, Pay Period**

All employees will submit timesheets on schedule as a basis for their pay. Salaried and hourly payroll is paid on a bi-weekly basis for all General Division staff, based upon submission of hours worked in the previous two-week period. In order to facilitate the payroll process and appropriate payment, all timecards must be submitted by close of business (5PM) on the Tuesday of the week during which payroll will be issued on a Friday (that is, every other week).

Friends Camp determines its payroll schedule in keeping with its operational needs.

All payments are made subject to deduction of appropriate withholdings in accordance with prevailing U.S. and state regulations, including Social Security and Medicare.

### **B. Workload and Overtime**

The workload of the Yearly Meeting is unevenly distributed throughout the year. If an overload condition persists, the situation should be raised either by the employee or the supervisor.

If the problem continues, the supervisor shall explore with the staff member alternative methods for addressing the overload. Recurrent periods of persistent overload are likely to indicate that the job description and/or expectations of the Yearly Meeting may need to be revised, or that there is a mismatch between the employee's current capacities and the demands of the role.

The employee's workload, priorities, and work context should be reviewed with their supervisor to identify "pain points" or areas where changes might be made to benefit both the employee and the Yearly Meeting. In some cases, this will require communication and boundary-setting on behalf of the supervisor, enlisting assistance from the Yearly Meeting Secretary, the Personnel Advisory Group, and, if necessary, clarification or reprioritization by the Secretary and/or the Coordinating & Advisory Committee.

### **1. Sessions Attendance, Weekend Work**

Attendance at Yearly Meeting Sessions is mandatory for program and administrative staff members, excluding the Camp Director and Camp staff, except as planned. Attendance at committee meetings or other activities is planned in consultation with the supervisor. Significant workload of some positions falls on weekends; the employee and their supervisor should ensure that weekend work is offset as possible by time off during the week.

### **2. Credit Hours**

The purpose of credit hours (flexible paid time off) is to allow salaried (overtime exempt) employees the opportunity for rest and rejuvenation after periods of unusually long work hours. Hourly employees are eligible to receive overtime, and so are not eligible to accumulate credit hours.

When the necessities of employment require more than 40 work hours in any one week, credit hours off shall be accrued. It shall be taken as soon as feasible to provide rest and relief and not later than the end of the fiscal year following its accrual. In all cases, use of credit hours is subject to the approval of the Yearly Meeting Secretary, consistent with the needs of the Yearly Meeting.

### **3. Overtime Pay for Non-Exempt Employees (Fair Labor Standards Act)**

Employees who are not salaried will be paid time-and-a-half for any hours worked beyond 40 hours in any week.

## **C. Discretionary Paid Time Off**

Paid time off (PTO) includes Vacation, Holidays and Credit Hours. All paid time off will be planned and taken subject to the approval of the supervisor and consistent with the needs of the Yearly Meeting.

Paid time-off accrual is based on the fiscal year.

### **1. Vacations**

Regular Full-Time employees are eligible for fifteen (15) days paid vacation per year. The vacation schedule is to be worked out in consultation with the supervisor, and then reported with ample notice to anyone who might be affected. The number of vacation days is pro-rated for regular part-time (hourly) employees.

Hourly staff accrue vacation time at a rate of 0.0577 hours per paid hour.

Vacation time must be used within two years of its accrual; for example, time off accrued in Fiscal Year 2024 must be used by the beginning of FY2026.

## **2. Holidays**

Regular Full-Time employees are entitled to ten paid holidays per year.

While respecting other staff's decisions to observe these holidays (and therefore be unavailable to collaborate), employees may elect to work during officially listed holidays, and to use this holiday-related PTO on any days of the year, with the approval of the Yearly Meeting Secretary.

The paid holidays are: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King's Birthday, Presidents Day, Juneteenth, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and the following Friday, and Christmas Day. When a required Yearly Meeting workshop or conference or other necessary work falls on a paid holiday, an employee shall be entitled to take a compensating day. This benefit is pro-rated for Regular Part-Time (hourly) employees; for example, a person who works 20 hours per week gets ten 4-hour holidays, which they may of course combine to constitute full days of PTO.

## **3. Sabbatical Leave**

After each seven years of service, all executive employees are eligible to request a six-month sabbatical at full pay with full benefits to provide an opportunity for personal or professional development. This can be taken as either a single six-month leave or as two three-month leaves in successive years.

Executive staff requesting a sabbatical should include a plan for how coverage will be provided in their absence, consulting with appropriate partners as needed. In the case of the Camp Director, approval of the Camp Committee and the Secretary is required. In the case of the Secretary, the plan for sabbatical coverage will be developed in consultation with the supervisor and appropriate partners as needed, and approved by the C&A Committee.

All arrangements for planned sabbaticals will be made at least three months in advance.

## **D. Non-Discretionary Paid Time Off and Leave**

### **1. Health Leave**

Regular Full-Time employees earn up to a maximum of 16 days a year,—or one and 1/3 days (10-2/3 hours) for each full month's work—of Health/Personal Leave, which can be used for health leave in case of personal illness. Health/Personal Leave is pro-rated for Regular Part-Time employees; hourly staff accrue health/personal leave at a rate of 0.0615 hour per paid hour.

During the first three months of service, health leave can only be called on as earned. After that, an employee may draw in advance the leave for personal illness to be earned during the year.

Employees are expected to notify their supervisor when they cannot work because of illness. Upon returning to work, an employee shall report the amount of health leave taken as part of reporting hours worked for payroll.

The limit for accumulated health leave is the number of health leave days that an employee would accrue in two years.

## **2. Personal Leave**

Up to ten days of the Health/Personal leave of a Regular Full-Time employee can be used as personal leave as needed in any one year. (Regular Part-Time personal leave is pro-rated.)

Personal leave is to be used to meet personal needs such as death or illness in the family, or other emergencies. Any time taken as personal leave must be approved by the employee's supervisor.

Notice should be given as for vacation time or health leave, as appropriate.

Personal leave time shall not be saved and added to future vacations or sabbaticals.

## **3. Family Leave**

An employee may take three months absence from work resulting from the birth or adoption of a child, or to serve as a temporary primary caregiver for a family member, of which six weeks will be paid leave. Vacation and health/personal leave may be added to the six weeks. Health insurance and other fringe benefit coverage will continue for the full three months, in any case.

Notice for family leave should be given as for vacation time or health leave, as appropriate.

## **4. Jury Duty**

While state and federal laws vary in their requirements, it is the policy of NEYM that an employee called to jury duty will be given leave with full pay for the duration of required jury service based on the assumption of an eight-hour work day. Any jury duty compensation an employee receives from the court shall be paid over to the Yearly Meeting.

The supervisor should be notified appropriately when an employee is called to jury duty, and the employee and supervisor should make a plan and arrangements for at least minimal coverage of responsibilities during this time.

## **5. Leave of Absence Without Pay**

An employee may apply for a leave without pay for purposes that may include study, service with another organization, and personal renewal. The employee will be required to pay for the full cost of benefits during this period.

Approval of the supervisor shall be obtained, and all arrangements made at least three months in advance.

## **6. Personal Spiritual Enrichment and Nurture**

A healthy vocation of ministry requires attention to one's personal spiritual condition and overall wellbeing. Therefore, Full-Time employees may request a spiritual retreat of up to three days per year at Yearly Meeting expense. Part-Time (hourly) employees are eligible for spiritual retreat time prorated based on their hours. Spiritual retreats are considered as *working* (not vacation or other PTO) time. Employees may choose a longer and/or more expensive retreat than the budget will allow, with excess costs borne personally and excess time taken as vacation or other paid time off.

The supervisor approves the scheduling of retreats to maintain both spiritual nurture and good workflow; the supervisor also approves reimbursement of retreat and travel expenses within budgeted limits.

## **E. Reporting and Record-Keeping of Staff Supervised by the Yearly Meeting Secretary**

Staff shall coordinate with their supervisor any use of allowed vacation and leave time to ensure that provisions are made to maintain coverage.

To assist with planning, staff intending to take vacation or leave time should inform their supervisor of their intention with as much advance notice as possible. Due to programmatic constraints, vacation and leave time may not be approved during certain periods (e.g. during Annual Sessions), except in emergencies. Circumstances requiring absence from work beyond allowances for each position must be approved in advance by the supervisor, who will coordinate with the affected staff on a case-by-case basis.

All staff record their use of paid time off as part of their hourly time logs submitted for payroll. Time away from work is also posted to the shared Staff Calendar when possible.

Each supervisor is responsible for maintaining appropriate records on an employee's work history and evaluations. Records of paid time off accrued and used will be maintained based on information submitted by the employee using the Yearly Meeting's time tracking and payroll software, as well as records and observations of the supervisor.

Employees are encouraged to keep records of their work, for their own use, for preparation of reflections and reports, and for ongoing reporting of hours worked.

All employees' permanent personnel files shall be maintained securely under the oversight of the Yearly Meeting Secretary.

Administration of personnel files is the responsibility of the Secretary, or in the case of exigent circumstances involving the Secretary's performance, the Advisor to the Secretary and the Clerk of the Permanent Board. Elements of the file may include an employee's application for employment, employee information form, approved job description, performance reviews, employment letters and other materials or correspondence pertinent to an employee's record of employment.

## **VII. TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT**

Termination of employment may be through an employee's resignation, by dismissal for cause, or due to the elimination of the position. Upon termination, employees shall be responsible for the dispensation of any retirement assets they have accrued during their term of employment.

### **A. Resignation, Transition (Training, Responsibility), and Retirement Planning**

An employee is free to resign during an appointment period; it is hoped that due consideration of the needs of the Yearly Meeting will be taken into account. A minimum of 30 days' notice is requested. When possible, the timing and process of termination should be planned by the employee and the supervisor. Notice of resignation should be given in writing to the Secretary. The Secretary (or the resigning employee, if the Secretary deems appropriate) will in turn inform relevant constituencies as soon as possible. The resigning employee shall receive payment for any accumulated vacation time.

Resigning or retiring employees are expected to participate as fully as possible in the creation and execution of a transition plan, including in requesting the availability of the resigning employee to support their replacement in overlapping service for a brief time, and to be available for a period of months after the end of their employment for reference calls, with the former employee to be compensated at an agreed-upon consulting rate. In some cases, accumulated credit hours may be used in whole or in part as part of a transition plan.

### **B. Dismissal**

Dismissal shall be for unprofessional, negligent, dangerous, or inappropriate behavior, or when in the judgment of the supervisor, or the Permanent Board clerk in the case of executive staff, the staff member is persistently found by their supervisor not to be adequately meeting the requirements of the job description.

Supervisors will consult with the clerk of the Permanent Board prior to communicating any intention of dismissal to the employee. Notice of dismissal shall be in the form of a letter from the supervisor to the employee, with a copy to the clerk of the Permanent Board, stating the reasons for action. Any dismissed employee shall receive payment for any accumulated vacation time (though not for accumulated credit hours).

A staff member may appeal a dismissal. In the case of an Administrative or Program staff member, a written appeal should be sent to the clerk of the Permanent Board, who will consult with the Secretary on next steps after investigating the situation. In the case of an executive-level staff member, a written appeal should be sent to the Presiding Clerk of the Yearly Meeting and the clerk of the Permanent Board.

### **C. Elimination of Position**

The Yearly Meeting Secretary may eliminate a position due to changes in the Yearly Meeting finances or the restructuring of staff positions. In this case, the employee holding that position will be laid off. In the case of a layoff, the employee shall receive at least one month's notice, with the expectation that the Yearly Meeting will be flexible to accommodate the need for the employee to seek other employment. Employees being laid off shall receive payment for any accumulated vacation time.

### **D. Change in Staffing**

In the event of changes in staffing caused by the resignation or dismissal of an employee, the supervisor may rehire to fill the vacancy within the limits of funds remaining in the fiscal year budget. However, a new structure or a different way to get the work done may be envisioned by the supervisor, in which case there should be consultation with relevant staff, committee clerks, and/or other relevant parties as the Secretary makes changes to job descriptions or contracted services agreements.

Transfers of allocations between Yearly Meeting budget lines to accommodate mid-year changes in staffing shall be approved consistent with the Yearly Meeting's policies on budgetary adjustments. Any increase in overall funding level must be approved according to Yearly Meeting procedures.

## **VIII. PROVISIONS FOR REVISION**

The Personnel Advisory Group (PAG) assists the Secretary in developing policy governing employment of paid staff of the Yearly Meeting. It advises the Secretary (and Camp Director, when necessary) as executive-level employees, including by assisting in responding to concerns of employees. The Purpose, Procedures, and Composition document for the Personnel Advisory Group is posted on the Yearly Meeting website.

In consultation as desired with the PAG and/or others with relevant skills, experience, and gifts, the Yearly Meeting Secretary develops and recommends new personnel policies and any changes to current personnel policy for consideration and approval by the Permanent Board. The Secretary is responsible for overall administration of the Personnel Policies.

This Policy Manual is not to be considered a contract, as elements of it may be changed at any time by action of the Permanent Board. Older versions of policies do not necessarily have precedence; if “grandfather” provisions are created they will be specifically noted. The current employment letter and the most recently approved version of this Personnel Policy should be referred to for specific information.

Suggestions for changes in or additions to the Personnel Policies should be shared with the Yearly Meeting Secretary, with particular encouragement to employees to contribute suggestions or raise concerns for attention. After consideration and consultation, including as desired with the Personnel Advisory Group, the Yearly Meeting Secretary may present proposed changes to the Permanent Board for its consideration and approval.

Revisions to the policies described in this manual must be approved by the Permanent Board.

Report from Phillip Veatch, Fresh Pond Monthly Meeting (Cambridge, MA)  
Presiding Clerk of New England Yearly Meeting  
To the Permanent Board, December 13, 2025

### **Approval of Minutes from Called Meeting on Gaza**

As requested at Sessions 2025, there was a called meeting of the Permanent Board on October 18. The clerk of PB opened the meeting and then, with the approval of the gathered body, turned over clerking to the yearly meeting's presiding clerk. See attached minutes from this meeting. The PB is asked to approve that the recorded minutes of this meeting are an accurate reflection of what occurred at the meeting.

Within the general minutes of the meeting, there were three numbered minutes approved by the gathered body:

25-\*1 - Asking Friends (individuals, monthly meetings and quarterly meetings) to consider if they are moved to take any (or all) of nine possible actions.

25-\*2 – Directing the Presiding Clerk to sign onto the Joint Quaker Statement on Gaza Genocide on behalf of NEYM.

25-\*3 – Asking the Presiding Clerk, the Clerk of Permanent Board and the Israel-Palestine Resource Group discern whether it is advisable to send a Friends witness delegation to Gaza.

The presiding clerk and the clerk of PB have already sent out the 25-\*1 action minute to all of the yearly meeting's monthly and quarterly meetings.

The presiding clerk has signed the statement as requested in 25-\*2.

See the next item in this report for details on follow-up to minute 25-\*3.

### **Implementing Actions Approved at the Called Meeting on Gaza**

At the October 18, 2025 called meeting on Gaza, the following minute was approved:

**The meeting charged the Presiding Clerk, the Clerk of Permanent Board and the Israel-Palestine Resource Group to convene to explore, in consultation with those with experience in the region and who could provide context on the ground, the idea of sending witnesses to Gaza from the Yearly Meeting. After this consideration, this group will bring a recommendation forward to Permanent Board for their discernment.**

The resource group and clerks have met with several people with experience in Gaza. The conclusion is that, at this time, it is not feasible for NEYM to send witnesses into Gaza for three principal reasons:

1. It is not safe for people to travel into and around Gaza.
2. The Israeli government is not allowing outsiders into Gaza.
3. The scarcity of food and other resources in Gaza means that even if someone could get into Gaza, their very presence would be taking away resources from residents who are in dire need.

However, the Israel-Palestine Resource Group of NEYM is continuing to actively explore two other initiatives that are in keeping with the spirit of the minute's request: 1) travel opportunities in the next few months to the West Bank; and 2) exploring ways in which the yearly meeting might create long-term relationships with people living in Palestine, such as strengthening our relationship with the Ramallah Friends School. The travel would most likely be for individuals travelling with other groups such as the Civilian Peace Force in the West Bank. The resource group is also keeping track of a longer term AFSC initiative that might lead to work service camps in Gaza. As details become clear on these initiatives, the resource group expects to return to Permanent Board for discernment and support.

### **In Support of the Rights of Asylum Seekers**

In consultation with the Yearly Meeting secretary, the presiding clerk signed a letter on behalf of NEYM to the Canadian Prime Minister in support of protections for asylum seekers. The letter can be found here:

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1o\\_bj6jZD6uVY5aWh-Y6DkmqbOLLvaQ9qP8b8br2TyfI/edit?tab=t.0](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1o_bj6jZD6uVY5aWh-Y6DkmqbOLLvaQ9qP8b8br2TyfI/edit?tab=t.0)

### **Planning for Sessions 2026**

There has been a great deal of research into potential sites for Sessions 2026. 44 sites have been reviewed. About 20 met our requirements and requests for proposals have been sent out. Our goal for having a site selected by early December has been stymied as we wait for critical responses to come back to us. Based on strong feedback from Sessions 2025 we are focused on sites near central Massachusetts. It should be noted that every site comes with trade offs in regard to our preferred accommodations.

### **Health of Quarterly Meetings**

I have had productive visits with the Vassalboro and Falmouth Quarterly meetings. My hope is that during the next year, our quarterly meetings will consider what topics are most important for us to work on when we gather for our annual Sessions - and will spend time discerning these topics within their quarter.

### **Draft Charge for Conflict Response Team**

The group creating a revised charge for the Conflict Response Team is meeting regularly. We are currently working on a detailed outline of what types of conflict the team is expected to engage with (along with guidance about the many other tools that we have for handling conflicts amongst ourselves that are not expected to be handled by the Conflict Response Team). It is our hope to be ready to bring a draft charge to the next Permanent Board meeting in February. The current members of this group are: Janet Hough, Becky Jones, Rebecca Leuchak, Alysia Parkes, Carl Williams, Susan Davies, and Phillip Veatch.

### **Upcoming Workshop**

I am registered to attend a four-day Pendle Hill Workshop in February entitled "Beyond Diversity 101".

To: The Permanent Board of New England Yearly Meeting of Friends  
From: Phillip Veatch, Fresh Pond Monthly Meeting (Cambridge, MA) Clerk, Coordinating and Advisory Committee  
Re: Report from C&A in preparation for the Permanent Board Meeting on December 13, 2025

### **Restorative Justice Charge**

PB had asked C&A to make recommendations regarding how the yearly meeting should work on retrospective restorative justice for communities other than Indigenous communities. We have begun discerning this and expect to bring suggestions to the February PB meeting.

### **Faith and Practice Revisions**

At the request of the Faith and Practice Revisions committee, C&A is working on drafting a chapter on the organization of the yearly meeting. It is anticipated that this will be more of an editing and updating of the 1985 organization chapter rather than a significant change. In parallel with this, an update to the by-laws of NEYM is also in the works. The by-laws are a principal way that NEYM interacts with governmental bodies and other legal entities outside of the Quaker world.

### **Legacy Gift Committee**

The clerk of the committee and the Yearly Meeting treasurer are in discussions over how best the treasurer might support the committee's work, perhaps as an ex-officio member of the committee.

### **Upcoming Retreat**

C&A will be holding its three-day winter retreat January 27-29. Among the topics we expect to dive into in depth are: clarifying membership requirements for various committees of the yearly meeting (to be done in consultation with existing committees); improving tracking the calendar of required committee reviews, restorative justice recommendations (see above); Sessions planning; considering the role of C&A and the wider yearly meeting in helping monthly meetings welcome newcomers; a request for guidance on the use of AI for meeting minutes; and continued work on strengthening the role of quarterly meetings in the life of the yearly meeting.

# DRAFT

## **NEYM Earthcare Ministry Resource Group Purpose, Procedures, and Composition**

### **Purpose**

The Earthcare Ministry Resource Group (EMRG) is charged with inviting New England Friends to consider their spiritual and physical dependence on the health of our planet, question human exceptionalism and move us toward harmonious living with the fullness of creation. EMRG supports monthly and quarterly meetings as they consider the systemic interconnections between social and environmental justice and whether the human-caused disruption of our natural ecosystems aligns with Quaker values. EMRG works toward change by helping meetings share stories, wisdom and resources with each other, facilitating mutually life-giving connections related to earthcare. Through education, outreach, and advocacy we support Friends as they may further this spiritual understanding to protect the rights of all life to clean water, clean air, and a stable climate for current and future generations.

Throughout the year, at its monthly meetings and hosted events, EMRG explores the spiritual basis for the just stewardship of creation, embracing the interdependence of the human and non-human worlds. EMRG provides guidance and accompaniment to Friends and their meetings as it encourages resource sharing toward right relationship with creation.

### **Procedures**

- As invited, offer resources to meetings as they explore and discern their role in earthcare witness;
- Invite Friends, as stewards of the natural world, to consider their personal and corporate lifestyles;
- Empower Friends to build the Beloved Community – based on economic, social, and ecological justice, resilience and sustainable living practices – through local and regional connections;
- Work with Sessions planners to arrange and host outdoor worship at Sessions;
- Offer, in collaboration with event planners, a workshop at Sessions and, when possible, opportunities for earthcare reflection at NEYM-sponsored events throughout the year;

- Check-in annually with Permanent Board and Coordinating and Advisory to discern whether this work is still needed in this form and if adjustments or further support may be appropriate;
- Report annually to Sessions

## **Composition**

- The resource group is made up of a clerk and five to seven Friends who together bring a range of qualities, gifts, and experiences needed to complete this charge, including the capacity for deep listening and prayerful holding of conversations, and openness to the diverse perspectives and experiences present in local meetings. Members of the group should have a commitment to meeting Friends where they are, and supporting them in their discernment. Within the group there should be Friends with skills in making presentations, communication, and resource sharing.
- Members nominated by the Nominating Committee in consultation with the Clerk of the Permanent Board and relevant partners and approved by the Permanent Board. Members serve staggered three-year terms, which are renewable. A Nominating Committee shepherd checks in periodically with the clerk.

## **Additional Yearly Meeting Support May include:**

- If appropriate, a page on neym.org with the text of this framing document;
- a neym.org contact email address if needed;
- meetings with NEYM communications staff as needed to integrate communications initiatives with wider NEYM communications strategy. If significant communications efforts with meetings, Friends broadly, or the wider public are a part of the charge, a communications plan developed in partnership with staff and approved by the Yearly Meeting Secretary.
- reimbursement for travel and caregiving costs during meetings and qualifying service. More info, contact the Office at [office@neym.org](mailto:office@neym.org).

**DRAFT: 6 November 2025**

**NEYM**  
**FY2025 Operating Budget vs. Actuals**  
October 2024 - September 2025

	Actual	Budget	over Budget	% of Budget
<b>Income</b>				
4010 Individual Contributions	212,545	228,000	-15,455	93%
4020 Monthly Meeting Contributions	353,284	345,000	8,284	102%
4030 Organizations Contributions	250		250	
4050 Interest and Dividend Income	4,953	11,000	-6,047	45%
4070 Books & Other Sales Income	6,024	10,500	-4,476	57%
4080 Retreat Program Fees	28,772	37,500	-8,728	77%
4085 Sessions Program Fees	196,314	214,895	-18,581	91%
4090 Change in Fair Market Value	-7		-7	
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>802,134</b>	<b>846,895</b>	<b>-44,761</b>	<b>95%</b>
<b>Gross Profit</b>	<b>802,134</b>	<b>846,895</b>	<b>-44,761</b>	<b>95%</b>
<b>Expenses</b>				
5000 Staff	496,411	516,314	-19,903	96%
5100 General & Administration	98,701	87,449	11,252	113%
5300 Travel & Conferences	17,577	22,300	-4,723	79%
<b>6000 Programs</b>				
6110 Sessions Room & Board (total UMass cost)	198,400	135,570	62,830	146%
Portion of UMass cost supported by Future Uses Fund	-59,038			
<b>Net 6110 Sessions Room &amp; Board (UMass cost to Operating)</b>	<b>139,362</b>	<b>135,570</b>	<b>3,792</b>	<b>103%</b>
6112 Retreats - Room & Board	21,822	20,000	1,822	109%
<b>6125 Program Expenses</b>				
6105 Honoraria - Speakers/Wkshp Ldrs	17,327	21,000	-3,673	83%
6107 Honoraria - Volunteer Leadership	9,000	15,000	-6,000	60%
6115 Equipment Rental	3,380	6,500	-3,120	52%
6121 Supplies and Other Expenses	4,554	5,000	-446	91%
6165 Pre-Sessions Expense	1,430	1,500	-70	95%
<b>Total 6125 Program Expenses</b>	<b>35,691</b>	<b>49,000</b>	<b>-13,309</b>	<b>73%</b>
6130 Committee Expenses - General	1,686	6,400	-4,714	26%
6160 Program Support	3,516	2,880	636	122%
<b>Total 6000 Programs</b>	<b>202,076</b>	<b>213,850</b>	<b>-11,774</b>	<b>94%</b>
6140 Books & Other Sales Expense	4,828	8,000	-3,172	60%
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>819,593</b>	<b>847,913</b>	<b>-28,320</b>	<b>97%</b>
<b>Net Operating Income</b>	<b>-17,459</b>	<b>-1,018</b>	<b>-16,441</b>	
<b>Other Income</b>				
9940 Other Income - ERTC credits (payroll tax refunds)	60,009		60,009	
<b>Total Other Income</b>	<b>60,009</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>60,009</b>	
<b>Other Expenses</b>				
9950 Other Expense - Transfer Camp portions ERTC to Camp	7,341		7,341	
<b>Total Other Expenses</b>	<b>7,341</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7,341</b>	
<b>Net Other Income</b>	<b>52,667</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>52,667</b>	
<b>Net Income (increase in operating/undesignated reserves)</b>	<b>35,208</b>	<b>-1,018</b>	<b>36,226</b>	

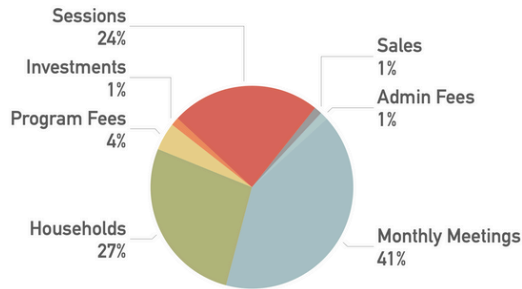
**Operating/Undesignated Reserves 9/30/2024** **26,859**  
% of FY25 budget: 3%

**Operating/Undesignated Reserves *preliminary* FY25:** **62,067**  
% of FY26 budget: 7%

Future Uses Fund balance 10/1/2024 319,925  
Future Uses Fund balance 9/27/2025 - *preliminary* 298,451  
**Future Uses balance 9/30/2025 (after Sessions support) 239,413**

## Income and Expenses

ANNUAL INCOME: ~\$850,000



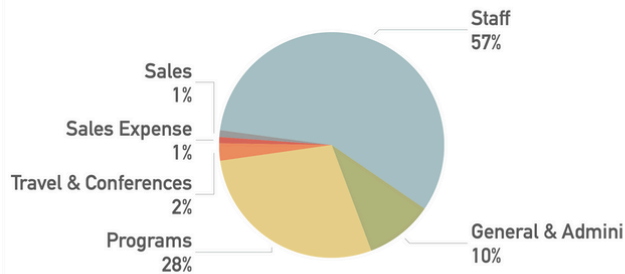
Annual contributions post-pandemic, while generous, have not kept pace with inflation overall

We need to adjust our shared expectations and participation to ensure financial sustainability and resilience year-to-year

## New England Yearly Meeting Is...

- Over 4000 people living our faith in the Quaker tradition across the six New England states
- More than 60 local Quaker congregations where the practice of this faith is encouraged
- An organization providing programs and services to liberate ministry and strengthen the present and future of the Quaker movement

ANNUAL EXPENSES: ~\$850,000



Costs have increased significantly in recent years—especially for Sessions and essential personnel

This is an issue facing all organizations—including Friends institutions more broadly

## Gathered in the Living Stream

### Nourishing the Quaker Movement in New England

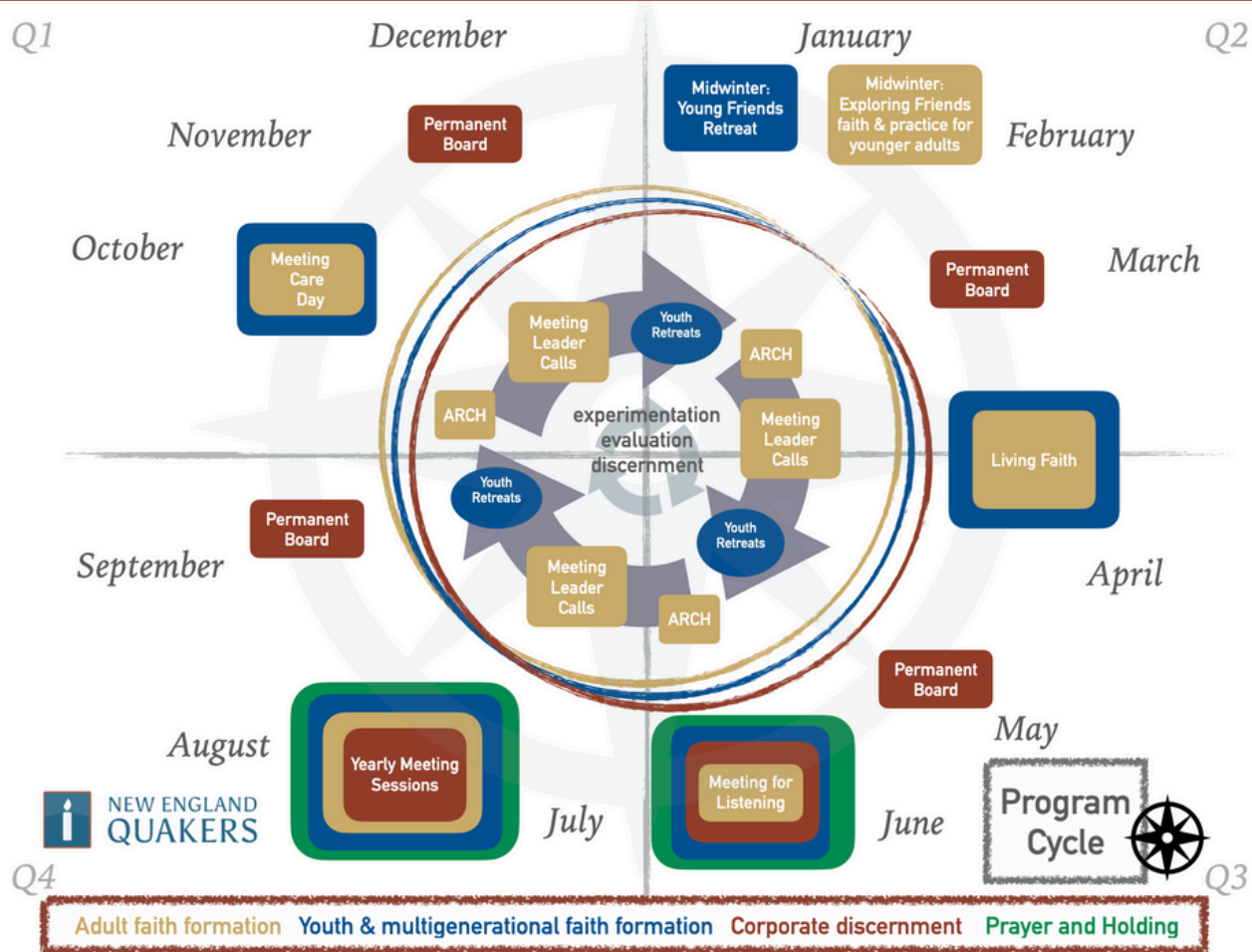


New England Yearly Meeting  
901 Pleasant Street  
Worcester, MA 01602  
[neym.org](http://neym.org)



NEW ENGLAND  
QUAKERS

# Yearly Meeting Annual Program Cycle



Serving throughout the year, Friends from across the Northeast support and strengthen a vibrant and thriving web of monthly meetings, quarterly meetings, and shared ministries, helping New England Quakers do together what we cannot do alone

## CELEBRATING NEW GROWTH & LIFE

Youth attending their first youth retreat in either the JYM, JHYM, or YF program.

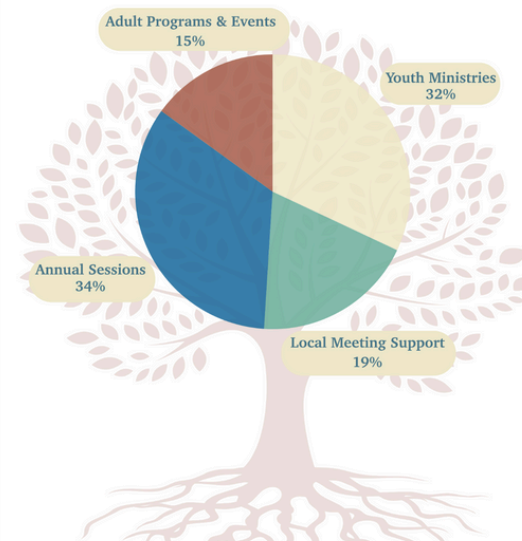
32

14

First time youth program volunteers this year.

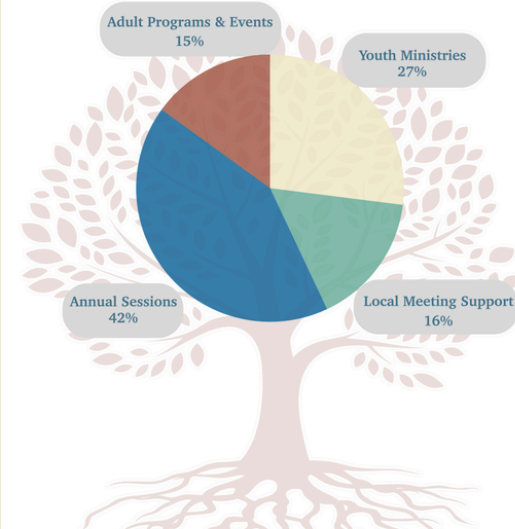
Newcomers/first-timers at events other than Sessions!

134



## 2024 Staff Time

Learn more at [neym.org](https://neym.org)



## 2024 Expenses

## **NEYM Nominating Committee Report to the Permanent Board**

December 5, 2025

**A second nominating report with a few additional names will be shared as soon as possible following our December 10th Nominating Committee meeting. Please watch for this report so that these additional nominations may also be considered for approval at the December 13 Permanent Board meeting.**

**In keeping with current tradition of the Permanent Board - these advance documents are used as the first reading for nominations to be approved at the coming meeting. Please contact me as soon as possible if you would like to discuss any of these nominations.\***

I will be unable to attend the Permanent Board meeting in-person myself this month due to a professional commitment that morning, though I hope to attend the afternoon session on zoom. Lucy Meadows has agreed to represent the Nominating Committee in my place for our report, as she will be attending in her role as the nominating shepherd for the Permanent Board.

The Nominating Committee had a productive and joyful day-long retreat at Monadock Monthly Meeting on October 25, 2025. We were glad to be joined for lunch by two Friends traveling on behalf of Right Sharing of World Resources. In our retreat, we renewed our understanding of the spiritual orientation of our nominating work, and the ways that our calls with Friends can be Opportunities for mutual spiritual encouragement. We deepened our connections with each other, which is already enriching our ongoing monthly zoom meetings. And, this extended time together also allowed for a fuller orientation to the work for newer members, and exploring how we will distribute our roles for the year.

We are grateful to share the following nominations for your consideration:

### **Archives & Historical Records:**

*"The Archives and Historical Records Committee is responsible for the care of records, correspondence, and other manuscript material of the Yearly, quarterly, monthly and preparative meetings, Yearly Meeting committees, New England Friends institutions, and individual members of the Yearly Meeting. This work is an aspect of our testimony of stewardship." - [Purposes, Procedures and Composition document of this committee](#)*

### **Archives & Historic Records Clerk - Elizabeth (Betsy) Cazden (Providence Monthly Meeting) to begin immediately, class of 2026**

Betsy Cazden is an active and well-known Friend who has served in multiple roles in both her local meetings and within New England Yearly Meeting (NEYM.) This has included service as NEYM's Presiding Clerk (1990-1994) and membership on various committees as a contributing Quaker historian, writer, speaker, and workshop leader. Betsy has most recently served as an active member of the Archives and Historic Records Committee (2017-current) and the Quaker Indigenous Boarding Schools Research Working Group (2022-2025). In these roles she has gained an extensive knowledge and experience in working with the Yearly

Meeting Archives at UMass Amherst and the work of this committee.

### **Permanent Board**

*"The Permanent Board acts with the authority of the Yearly Meeting between Annual Sessions. It implements decisions and policy made by Sessions. It acts upon matters where, in the opinion of the Board, a decision cannot await Sessions. It seasons issues which come to its attention, presenting recommendations to Sessions if appropriate. On the recommendation of the Coordinating and Advisory Committee, it considers the work of Yearly Meeting committees."* - [Purposes, Procedures and Composition document of this committee](#)

### **Permanent Board, Recording Clerk - Fran Lightsom (Sandwich Monthly Meeting, West Falmouth Preparative Meeting) to begin immediately, class of 2028**

Fran became a member of the Religious Society of Friends at Sandwich Monthly Meeting (West Falmouth Preparative Meeting) in 2007. She has served on Permanent Board for 5 years and is starting a term as Sessions Recording Clerk. She is currently clerk of Sandwich Monthly Meeting and has served as preparative meeting clerk and clerk of multiple committees. Fran has retired from the US Geological Survey where she managed people and projects that manage scientific data and create information products. Fran has agreed to serve a three year term as the recording clerk of Permanent Board.

### **Youth Ministries Committee:**

*"The Youth Ministries Committee serves to regularly engage in on-going listening across the Quaker youth ministries "landscape" in New England. Based on their listening, the Committee regularly identifies both the growing edges of Quaker youth ministry in New England and current needs related to the spiritual development of Quaker children, youth, and families. The Committee act as storytellers and advocates, sharing relevant takeaways from their listening with the wider Yearly Meeting."* - [Purposes, Procedures and Composition document of this committee](#)

### **Youth Ministries, member - Jana Noyes (Westerly Monthly Meeting), to begin immediately, class of 2028**

Jana agreed to join our Youth Ministries Committee with appreciation for all that her first three grandchildren have benefited from NEYM, now hoping to maintain such opportunities for her last grandchild. She served on JYM retreat staff for many years and is best known for her cheerful cart service as NEYM's Access Coordinator since before Sessions at Bryant. She lives with her wife Barbara Dakota and is currently in the thick of retiring as a therapist this month.

**Again, with apologies for the delay, please watch for an anticipated addendum to this report prior to the Permanent Board meeting, so that the full list of nominations may be considered at the December 13th Permanent Board meeting.**

Please contact me directly with any questions.

With gratitude,

Sadie Forsythe (Putney/also attending Mt Toby)  
Clerk, NEYM Nominating Committee  
[nomclerk@neym.org](mailto:nomclerk@neym.org) or 215-360-1815

Nominating Committee members: Beth Hansen (Westerly), Chris Gant (Beacon Hill), Darcy Drayton (Weare), Kathleen Wooten (Lawrence), Tim Lamm (Worcester), Martha Schwope (Wellesley), Leslie Manning (Durham), Lucy Meadows (Beacon Hill/moving to Hanover), Sadie Forsythe (Putney)

\* The process for approving nominations by the Permanent Board during the year is to send *first readings* in a written report a week or so in advance of the Permanent Board meeting. Any concerns, questions or affirmations should be communicated immediately to the Nominating Committee clerk. The clerk will follow-up with a nominee to share concerns without naming who brought them forward. The focus will be on the concerns and how they may be addressed. Depending on the outcome of this exchange, the nominee will either be brought forward for second reading, or withdrawn from the nomination. Depending on the situation, there may be a brief mention of the concerns and response.

## **NEYM Nominating Committee Report to the Permanent Board**

### **- Part 2 -**

December 10, 2025

In keeping with current tradition of the Permanent Board - these advance documents are used as the first reading for nominations to be approved at the coming meeting. Please contact me as soon as possible if you would like to discuss any of these nominations.\*

This report is the second in a two-part report to the board this month. In consultation with our board clerk, Susan Davies, I decided to send the reports in two sections so that the portion that was ready could be submitted earlier, and the remainder following our Nominating Committee meeting today to allow Friends maximum time to consider these names prior to the board meeting.

I am pleased to have four more nominations for the board's consideration, all for the Puente de Amigos Committee:

### **Puente de Amigos Committee**

*"Puente de Amigos Committee (Bridge of Friends) fosters a spiritual relationship, based on mutual respect, equality, and love between New England Yearly Meeting (NEYM) and Cuba Yearly Meeting (CYM) to which both meetings have been corporately called. Since 1991 the relationship with Cuba Yearly Meeting has been an important part of the religious life of New England Yearly Meeting, and the committee works to support the continuation of this ministry."* - [Purposes, Procedures and Composition document of this committee](#)

When possible, Nominating finds it helpful for Friends serving on Puente to be familiar with Friends in both New England and Cuba, and to have some Spanish language ability to support the ongoing relationship between our yearly meetings.

### **Puente, member - Bob Watt (Providence Monthly Meeting), to begin immediately, class of 2028**

Bob Watt is an immigration attorney, fluent in Spanish, and has been to Cuba several times in recent years. He is an Alternatives to Violence (AVP) trainer and has trained Cuban Friends to be AVP leaders. He has also been active in supporting the sister relationship between Providence and Floro Perez meetings, and is active in making strong connections with Friends in leadership roles within Cuba Yearly Meeting.

### **Puente, member - Chris Jorgensen (Friends Meeting of Cambridge), to begin immediately, class of 2028**

Chris Jorgensen brings a breadth and depth of experience and spiritual grounding, and has been involved with New England Yearly Meeting for a long time, Chris a fluent Spanish speaker having previously lived in Mexico, and has been to Cuba many times. She also holds many connections through involvement with the Friends World Committee for Consultation Section of the Americas.

**Puente, member - Hannah Colbert (Portland Friends Meeting), to begin immediately, class of 2028**

Hannah Colbert has been to Cuba once and has a spiritual leading to deepen involvement through Puente. She is also supporting Portland Friends Meeting's sister meeting relationship with Velasco Meeting.

**Puente, member - Kim Bolshaw (Durham Friends Meeting), to begin immediately, class of 2028**

Kim Bolshaw has traveled to Cuba and has been active in supporting the relationship Durham Friends Meeting shares with Portland with Velasco Meeting in Cuba. She has been focused on learning Spanish for the past few years, and feels led to foster spiritual connection through this work.

Please contact me directly with any questions.

With gratitude,

Sadie Forsythe (Putney/also attending Mt Toby)  
Clerk, NEYM Nominating Committee  
[nomclerk@neym.org](mailto:nomclerk@neym.org) or 215-360-1815

Nominating Committee members: Beth Hansen (Westerly), Chris Gant (Beacon Hill), Darcy Drayton (Weare), Kathleen Wooten (Lawrence), Tim Lamm (Worcester), Martha Schwoppe (Wellesley), Leslie Manning (Durham), Lucy Meadows (Beacon Hill/moving to Hanover), Sadie Forsythe (Putney)

\* The process for approving nominations by the Permanent Board during the year is to send *first readings* in a written report a week or so in advance of the Permanent Board meeting. Any concerns, questions or affirmations should be communicated immediately to the Nominating Committee clerk. The clerk will follow-up with a nominee to share concerns without naming who brought them forward. The focus will be on the concerns and how they may be addressed. Depending on the outcome of this exchange, the nominee will either be brought forward for second reading, or withdrawn from the nomination. Depending on the situation, there may be a brief mention of the concerns and response.

## Memorial Minute for Lucy Townsend

Lucy Townsend (1928-2023) became a member of Hartford Meeting in 2013, however her association with Friends began in 1938 when her widowed mother, Elizabeth (Libby) married Paul Butterworth. Paul was a birthright Quaker, one of the small group of Friends who, inspired by Tom Bodine of Hartford Friends, had just begun to meet for worship at Hartford Seminary, where Lucy and her sister joined them. When this group became established as Hartford Monthly Meeting in 1940, Paul was its first Clerk. He was also prominent in the work of reclaiming the property on Quaker Lane and the subsequent building of the current Meeting House. Through her strong bond with her new stepfather, Lucy was drawn early into life in our Meeting and the beliefs and practices were to become a part of her long life.

With the beginning of World War II, Hartford Meeting was very engaged in relief efforts, gathering bundles of clothes to send to Europe, and also supporting the refugees that came to the U.S. Lucy remembers the dozens of refugees that came through Hartford, desperately needing permanent visas, jobs, food or shelter. Her family opened its doors to these newcomers, some for a short time to stay and some longer. She never forgot their poignant stories.

One in particular, Shizue Nishijima, a Nisei, a US citizen of Japanese ancestry, had been released from a relocation center in Arizona, and stayed with the family for four years. Lucy remembered her speaking at Paul Butterworth's Memorial service, saying "I would like to thank the Quakers, but especially Uncle Paul and his family for showing me there was still brotherly love, even during the war." Shizue became Lucy's closest friend, and they stayed in touch until Shizue's death.

The discussions within the Quaker community and her family about the draft as the U.S. entered World War II strongly influenced Lucy's sense of fairness and her deep faith of that of God in each of us. Both of her Butterworth brothers were conscientious objectors. Frequently, undecided young men appeared at meeting, seeking draft counseling.

Lucy had a deep thirst for knowledge, and her experiences during World War II left her keenly interested in questions of the role of pacifism. She was widowed three times and each of her husbands had been associated with the military. Despite living with such a range of perspectives, Lucy believed that non-violence and reconciliation are the best routes toward peace. How could it not be, if that of God is within each of us, was her belief.

Lucy's life was filled with teaching, volunteering, and "raising" a family, and her philosophy involved fostering open minds and caring hearts. With her multiple blended families, she shared twelve children. She loved to celebrate beauty and humor: the radiance of a young mother cradling her first born, or paddling a kayak and listening for the wild call of a loon at dawn on a northern lake or seeing and hearing a pink-cheeked boy, masterfully playing classical guitar, or remarkable times of close communication with loved ones, or the noble presence of an introverted older person nearing death, deeply eager to share his feelings before it was too late. Lucy was committed to making a contribution to her family and to her community and felt that "caring is the greatest thing; caring matters most."

Lucy was part of a book group with other Quaker women for decades, and was known for asking pointed questions, finding deep threads and commonalities across a variety of books, and re-reading the books that she didn't like, to be sure she was giving them a fair shake and to find the deeper wisdom or truths they had to offer.

Lucy believed families should worship together when possible, so that at best they could all be, metaphorically, workers in the same vineyard. Her faith affiliation at the time often matched that of her husband. She was affiliated with Trinity Episcopal Church in Hartford, First Church of Christ (Congregational) and Westminster Presbyterian Church. She believed in the commonality of these various faith communities, including Friends. She remembers attending Trinity Episcopal's Membership Class, where the perceptive facilitator recognized that her beliefs were more aligned with Quakerism and encouraged her to return to the Friends Meeting. She then applied for membership after the death of her third husband. She felt that she had "come home" to Friends. Her presence added to the depth of worship in our Meeting. And she brought a special gift to pastoral care in the meeting, modeling her witness of care. After her move to Wellesley to be nearer to family, she retained her membership in Hartford Meeting, coming back regularly for worship, and continuing to enrich our community.

Lucy loved the mystery of silent worship, often intensified by spoken messages, uncluttered by ritual or liturgy; listening for "the still, small, voice"; the unifying belief of God within each of us, the spiritual inner light which binds us all together; the emphasis on the humanity of the good man Jesus - his teaching by parable and by the example of his life; walking with others who are striving 'to walk cheerfully on this earth, answering that of God in everyone'".

Hartford Monthly Meeting, Sixth Month 15, 2025

Accepted by Connecticut Valley Quarterly Meeting on October 4, 2025

Nancy Genevieve Belcher First  
July 11, 1929 - May 23, 2025

Nancy First was a Friend whose kindness was wrapped around respect for life and a core of dedication to social justice.

Born in Chicago, Illinois, to Laura Elizabeth Armstrong and John Goddard Belcher, Nancy's family later lived in Darien, Connecticut. She graduated from Cornell University with a degree in botany. Nancy met her future husband, Robert First, in New York City; they married in May of 1955. They celebrated their 64th wedding anniversary just days before Bob's death in 2019.

Nancy and Bob moved to Wilmington, Delaware, where their first child, Ginger Lee, was born. It was also in Wilmington that Bob and Nancy discovered a Friends Meeting and began their lifelong devotion to the Quaker faith. The family moved to Mt. Kisco, New York, where their second child, Katherine Ann, was born. Mt. Kisco is where they raised their girls and made their home until 1992. They joined and became deeply involved in the Quaker community at Purchase Friends Meeting in Purchase, New York. Nancy was volunteering at a homeless shelter there and invited a group of teens from Purchase Quarterly Meeting to help. Years later, an adult Friend with that youth group was delighted to discover Nancy, both now at Northampton Friends.

In 1992 Nancy and Bob moved to Olympia, Washington, where they lived for ten years and were active in Olympia Friends Meeting. In 2002 they moved to western Massachusetts and became members of Northampton Friends Meeting.

Nancy was immediately active, bringing letter-writing topics and materials to the Meeting for Friends' participation every month. Nancy firmly believed in the Inner Light, that of the Divine in every person. This was the underpinning of her commitment to social activism. She wrote letters, sometimes daily, to politicians. She stood weekly in peace vigils for years. She was arrested for civil disobedience protesting nuclear energy plants and weapons.

A Friend remembers Nancy as one of the first people to welcome her to Northampton Friends, consistently reaching out to include her with news and invitations, time and again demonstrating *agape* - the highest form of love, charity.

When the Meeting was asked to participate in the city's First Night events, Nancy volunteered to organize the team needed throughout the afternoon and evening. She managed the event for years, training volunteers and keeping all the moving parts working smoothly with her signature cheerful kindness. Nancy also helped organize and contributed to the Meeting's craft fair. Friends still use her colorful aprons and potholders with great fondness for their maker. She also served for a time as the face of the Meeting in scheduling and welcoming renters

Nancy was a lover of nature. She featured landscapes and trees in her lovely paintings. She saw poetry all around her - in birds, gardening, life. An avid gardener, Nancy brought bouquets of flowers from her garden every week, brightening the worship room and fellowship tables. She freely shared the flowers' beauty while sharing her own.

In her interaction with people, Nancy shared that same positive outlook, generous and caring. Whether taking big actions or making small gestures, Nancy was thoughtful and filled with delight. And even toward the end of her long life, when her memory flagged, Nancy continued writing letters of support to Friends having difficulties. She was unfailingly kind and concerned for others, thanking visitors with her warm smile and shining eyes.

She lived an example for us all.

Northampton Friends Meeting  
Approved at business meeting held 09/14/2025  
Marcianna Caplis, clerk

Accepted by Connecticut Valley Quarterly Meeting on October 4, 2025

## Memorial Minute for William Ray Taylor

On Friday, April 18, 2025, at the Seabury community in Bloomfield, CT, our dear Friend, Bill Taylor, passed away at age 92. Bill was a steady, wise, loving presence at Hartford Friends Meeting for many years. Together, he and his wife, Barbara (Bobbie), were mainstays of the Meeting. Bill joined the Meeting in 1970. They were always dependable, always insightful and supportive. We are blessed to still have Bobbie with us, but we so miss Bill.

Bill was born in Leominster, MA, and attended Worcester Polytechnic Institute as an undergraduate. He received his medical degree from Columbia University and had a long career in child, adolescent, and family psychiatry in Central and Eastern Connecticut. Bill brought his professional talents to Hartford Meeting in a gentle, unpretentious way, doing what needed to be done, often out of sight of many of the folks in Meeting. He could sometimes be seen spending time in free play with the children, providing counsel to those in need, and co-clerking (with Bobbie) the Memorial Committee for decades. Bill helped to facilitate the gaining and installation of some of the memorial plaques of deceased members, which adorn the outside of the front of the Meeting House. Bill and Bobbie were active members of PFLAG (Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays), well ahead of the nation in providing support for the LGBTQ+ community. He also helped out with the Meeting library and could be seen on Meeting Work Days fully participating.

Bill loved learning, reading, and writing on topics including mental health, politics, and children's literature and would occasionally offer workshops on various issues of special interest to him at New England Yearly Meeting Sessions. He also enjoyed working with his hands and solving problems associated with all sorts of home projects. We will remember him for his kindness, brilliance, generosity, warmth and his wry sense of humor.

Bill and Bobbie raised their three children, Bill, Susan and Beth, within Hartford Meeting. At Bill's memorial service they attested to his being "a wonderful and creative father and grandfather, who took particular joy in spending time with his grandchildren". And Bill was a steadfast and loving husband to Bobbie throughout their 66 years together.

In all regards, Bill's was a life well lived.

Hartford Monthly Meeting

June 15, 2025

Accepted by Connecticut Valley Quarterly Meeting on October 4, 2025

These minutes from Friends Meeting at Cambridge are for a first reading only, as they are not complete.

## **Christine (“Chris”) Connaire 1934-2019**

If you didn’t know that Chris Connaire was a theater professional, you might have been able to guess. She dressed with flair, spoke crisply, with an enduring English accent, and was capable of making a grand entrance. But Chris was also always authentically herself: kind, generous to a fault, passionate about social justice. She was a force of nature engaging people from different walks of life with equal interest, concern, and enthusiasm.

Chris was born February 10, 1934 in Esher, UK, outside London. She was raised by her father and stepmother. One of Chris’s most indelible memories of living through World War II in England arose for her more than once in vocal ministry in Friends’ worship many years later. Participating in a civic program just after the war, her family took in a German prisoner of war for a time. It was Christmas, and in an effort to assuage the intense loneliness of the displaced German soldiers, children were taught at school how to sing “Silent Night” in German as well as English. Singing the carol in German with the stunned young man who had been dropped into their family circle deepened for Chris a passionate, lifelong pacifism.

Chris came to the United States, reuniting with her mother in pursuit of her education, earning a bachelor’s degree from Hope College in Holland, Michigan, and a master’s degree from Wellesley College.

Chris was a co-founder of the People’s Theater in the 1970s. She was involved in helping racially integrate the theater and took the reins when leadership was needed. Later she served as director of the Cambridge Arts Council. She was an indispensable member of a small group of Quakers who met monthly to read plays aloud together for fun.

Stephanie Fox, a niece related “by divorce” remembered at Chris’ memorial that when she came to family events that included children, she “talked funny, wore odd hats, and was colorful and playful, arriving in costume with her kids.” She went on, “Chris had a calling to spark imagination in all and to express being brave. Chris treated everyone as co-equal.”

Chris became a member of the Friends Meeting at Cambridge 2008 and stayed engaged until her death. She ran the meeting’s First Day School (FDS) from 2010 to 2014 with a combination of tenderness and no-nonsense fierceness encouraging our youth to be their true selves—a blessing she had not always been afforded as a child. Perhaps it was a voice of authority declaring a girl’s “proper” place that empowered Chris to burst forth with her vibrant spirit.

As FDS Coordinator she developed relationships with all the children and teens, speaking to their differing needs. Her infectious enthusiasm for her work with the youth, as well as the joyous Christmas pageants they produced together, kept the young people present in the minds and hearts of adults in the community. She made work into fun, enriching, and connecting our community at Friends Meeting at Cambridge.

Friends remember Chris’ dedication to prison ministry, visiting incarcerated individuals as well as helping their transition upon release. Chris served on the board of Concerned Elders, Inc. -- a

Massachusetts non-profit founded in 2014, now renamed the Community Re-entry Program. She was a consistent friend of prisoners, returning citizens and recent immigrants, sharing her life and her possessions.

Chris advocated for the needs of others in many ways. She modeled considerate, compassionate interaction with homeless people. Chris regularly led the meeting's youth in making meals for a nearby shelter. A Friend remembers the years, for a few weeks before Christmas, that Chris would stand at the rise of Meeting, and "invite us -- in her inimitable Chris way -- to drop money into her Santa's sack. She was raising funds for homeless women and children at the Y in Central Square. We could not respond to her request fast enough."

Chris's energetic generosity also took her back across the Atlantic several times to be with and, in the end, to ensure good care for her stepmother Kitty. The relationship had been a sustaining one in Chris's younger life and flowered as Chris made the faithful trips that taxed her budget but nourished her heart.

Another Friend remembered her pride in her son, Colin, and in his roles both in taking care of his family and as a police officer. She was proud of her daughter, too, keeping Celia's artwork within eyesight and talking of her impressive job.

An avid camper when she was younger, and swimmer even in old age, Chris embraced new adventures including marriage. She let her friends know that she was over the moon about Jonathon Fine, whom she married as soon as she turned eighty.

When a doctor informed her that she had inoperable cancer, she received the news calmly without tears. "I survived the bombing of London when I was a child," she told the doctor, explaining that she had faced death before and she was not afraid.

During her long stay at the Miriam Boyd Parlin Hospice Residence in Wayland she had many visitors among Quakers, colleagues and family. From her bed she daily perused the New York Times and Boston Globe to keep abreast of world events. She became a favorite among the volunteers and staff. One volunteer said, "I learned how to die from her."

Chris died at age 85 Thursday, September 5, 2019. She is survived by her two children, Celia Connaire and Celia's spouse, John Budish, of Brick, NJ, and Colin Connaire and his spouse Nicole, grandchildren, and extended family. She was predeceased by her first husband, Joseph Connaire, and second, Jonathan Fine.

As she lay dying, Chris told Friends that she looked forward to rejoining Jonathan and telling him, "I'll tell him 'I told you so!'" that there was an afterlife. Shortly before her death she was looking up and was asked what she saw. "Jonathan." How's he look? "Good." Is he looking back at you? "Oh, yes!"

A Memorial Meeting for Worship was held December 14, 2019, at 2:00 PM at the Friends Meeting at Cambridge, 5 Longfellow Park, Cambridge MA 02138.

## Memorial Minute for Joan Austin

Friends Meeting at Cambridge lost a treasured member, Joan Austin, on April 28th, 2019, just a few weeks before her 98<sup>th</sup> birthday. An activist, advocate, and near neighbor of the Meeting, Joan found Friends in the early 1970s, and became a member in 1974.

Joan (Perkins) Austin grew up in Greenwich, Connecticut, outside New York City. Even as a child she felt a deep spiritual connection with the natural world. The youngest of four in a large blended family, she attended Presbyterian services like her much older siblings, but never adopted that tradition. She cherished the outdoors, especially the beauty of Mishaum Point in South Dartmouth, MA where her family spent every summer.

Joan attended Milton Academy and Vassar College, and went on to earn her Master's in American History at Columbia in 1944. There she met her first husband, John Garraty. The couple settled in Michigan and had three children: John, Katharine, and Sarah. The family returned to New York when her husband was offered a position at Columbia.

For several years Joan taught second and third grades at private schools in New York and Connecticut. After her first marriage ended in divorce, she reconnected with John Austin, a former beau who had moved to California. They were married in 1966, and Joan and her younger daughter, Sarah, moved to Berkeley to live with him. However, it was a tumultuous time for all. As Joan struggled with her own emotional hardship and recovery, the marriage unraveled, and the couple divorced in 1970. Joan then moved to Massachusetts, first to Lexington, and then to Cambridge.

In addition to her twelve-step work Joan became active in Massachusetts in a variety of progressive causes. Notably, she served as Director of Common Cause Massachusetts during the Dukakis administration. She also supported the Dartmouth Natural Resources Trust near her summer home; Joan was passionate about the natural resources of the area, as well as its history.

Many Friends will remember her vocal ministry lifting up the wonders of nature; the miracles she found there spoke to her spirit. Yet Joan's generosity, hospitality, and compassionate presence nurtured the Meeting as much as her messages in worship.

Living only steps from Longfellow Park, Joan gave tremendous energy to the Meeting, greeting attenders at the door, bringing fresh flowers, and tending the meetinghouse gardens. Over decades she served in many roles at FMC, including several stints on Oversight Committee (as it was then known), of which she was appointed clerk in 1999. The committee met regularly at her house on Foster Place, a haven for Quaker gatherings. Joan hosted not only individuals, but potlucks and events; for years the West Cambridge Village group met for worship in her home.

Joan can be credited with several practices that still inform our community life today. She

instituted the practice of checking in at the beginning of meetings, something that was particularly helpful to one member who was going through a difficult time in her life. In addition, under Joan's care, Oversight Committee established monthly meetings for healing on Thursday evenings. Joan also led a memorable forum on "Healing from Childhood Trauma: Turning in to the Healing Presence of God in our Community."

In 2001 Joan moved to Brookhaven, an assisted living community in Lexington that included several other Quakers. She attended the Brookhaven Worship Group for a time, but its silence did not speak to her condition and she stopped coming. However, she maintained contact with friends at Cambridge through periodic visits. When her daughter Katherine died suddenly in 2005, Joan turned to FMC for a memorial meeting.

In addition to her children, Joan had three grandchildren and played an active role in their lives from their births to her death. When she died, she also left two great-grandchildren, and another has been born since.

Just as Joan's presence was essential to Friends Meeting at Cambridge, so the Meeting was dear to Joan. Those who knew her respected her connection with Friends as they did her connection with the natural world. Though she suffered from alcoholism in her younger years, Joan always said that it was through Friends worship that she found the Higher Power that sustained her in recovery for the rest of her life.

## **Memorial Minute for Lynn Lazar**

Lynn Patricia Chandler Lazar was born on January 14, 1936, in Oakland, California, to Scott and Marie Chandler. Lynn grew up in Oakland, graduating from Oakland High School and then moving down the road to Berkeley for college, graduating with a degree in Art History. Lynn's mother Marie worked at a credit union that played a significant role in helping the Oakland community socially and economically; as a child, Lynn would often visit Marie at work, listening to stories and absorbing the atmosphere of loving concern and practical action.

Lynn was briefly married to Roger Moss in the late 1950's. She subsequently met and married Edward Lazar, with whom she shared formative experiences of work for social justice and peace, along with two children, Sarania and Susie. Ed and Lynn worked on the Everyman Boat antinuclear protest in the early 1960's. Then, after brief stays in New York and Rhode Island, they traveled together to India to participate in the 1963 Delhi to Peking Friendship March. They came back to the United States, staying for a few years, then returned to India, living in an ashram, where spiritual growth was emphasized and the residents performed daily living tasks together. After the birth of Sarania, they decided that they should be closer to modern health care for the sake of their baby. They moved back to the Bay Area, then made their way to Cambridge, Massachusetts, when Ed accepted a job at the American Friends Service Committee.

The couple had their second child, Susie, while living in Cambridge. The entire family, Lynn, Ed, Sarania and Susie, became full members of Friends Meeting at Cambridge in 1972 (later on, Ed resigned and Sarania and Susie let their memberships lapse when they

reached adulthood). Soon after, the marriage ended, and Lynn became a single parent raising her two girls; after 1980 or so, they lived in her house on Gorham Street in Cambridge, which was Lynn's address for the rest of her life.

Lynn was a strong woman who managed to balance single parenthood with a full professional life. Her girls were well-loved, and Lynn allowed them to be quite independent, but could be firm when that seemed called for. When the family faced challenges, they shared and processed their feelings in a circle, a practice that Lynn loved and urged on her friends the rest of her life.

In Cambridge, Lynn worked for Vocations for Social Change in Central Square, first as a volunteer, then in a paid position; she conducted counseling groups of young people and people in mid-career centered on how to bring social justice meaning to their work. Lynn was always intrigued about work; she loved reading and discussing Studs Terkel. (She was also continually introducing her friends to newfound favorite authors: John Paul Lederach, Michele Alexander, and many others.)

After leaving Vocations for Social Change, Lynn went back to school to earn a certificate in counseling, and she started working as a drug counselor at The Third Nail in Boston. Later she worked at Transition House, an agency to help battered women. She participated in training police about domestic violence. For a short time, she worked as a temporary employee at Harvard University, then in a full-time job at the Aids Institute there. She then became involved in hospice work, and finally took up massage therapy, which she practiced until she retired. Throughout her work life, Lynn practiced and shared her enthusiasm for nonviolent communication.

Everywhere Lynn worked, she formed deep friendships and welcomed her friends into her home; there were many shared evenings nourished with tostados, curries, or other treats that she created out of whatever was in her tiny refrigerator, using a small toaster oven. As one friend said at her Memorial, “She made you feel like a rock star, just sitting and talking with her.” Lynn and her daughters seldom lived alone in the house—there might be women who were victims of domestic violence, Buddhist monks, or others who just needed a place to stay for a while.

Lynn’s first grandchild, Angel, son of Sarania and her partner Ernesto Osegueda, was born in California in 1999, and Lynn moved back to her home state to help out. In 2002, Lynn, along with Sarania’s family, moved back to Cambridge, where they lived in two apartments in the Gorham Street house. (Sarania, Ernesto and Angel still live there, and they are preparing Lynn’s old apartment for rental.) Meanwhile, Lynn’s daughter Susie had her son Jahli in 2000 and then her daughter Gianna, who attended First Day School at Friends Meeting at Cambridge for a while with her cousin Jordan, in 2008.

In her later years, Lynn spent much time volunteering with local non-profits such as Haley House, Louis D Brown Peace Institute, Boston Worker’s Alliance, Cambridge Interfaith Sanctuary Coalition, as well as Friends Meeting at Cambridge, where she was active with the Living with Dying Resource Committee, First Day School Committee, Youth Programs Committee, Ministry and Counsel, the Wednesday night Sharing Circle, among other groups. Everywhere she went, Lynn would volunteer to do work, but what she liked to do most was to talk with staff, volunteers, and clients, sharing her insights, listening and learning, and, above all, being a connection-maker (she would say, “You must meet so-and-

so; they are doing fabulous work.”). She spoke with friends about the importance of “going across the river” into Boston to talk to people with different life experiences, rather than staying on the Cambridge side of the Charles, talking among ourselves about social justice.

Lynn had many ideas and suggestions for peace and justice projects that she urged on her friends, her committees, her groups, and a number of her ideas came into fruition. Establishing a bail fund for the son of a friend was accomplished quickly and led to an ongoing Cambridge Bail and Legal Defense Fund. Her idea that Friends Meeting at Cambridge should apply to sponsor a Boston chapter of Quaker Voluntary Service caught on after a few months of talking and leg work by her and a couple of friends she recruited; it is going strong today. Sometimes, Lynn would be frustrated that she could not get people to join with her in working on her ideas (Someday Farm on Longfellow Park is far from being realized, for example). She would lament what she perceived as her inability to express clearly what her vision was or what next steps might be.

Lynn was, in fact, concerned that all she had learned and experienced in her very active life would be lost unless she could get it written down and organized. Her basement was crammed with papers; when her children suggested that she reduce the piles, she objected, “Those papers are HISTORY!” She tried to write systematically about some of the social justice organizations she had been involved in, but this was a big challenge for her. (She would have been delighted to know that some of her papers are now being archived at the University of Massachusetts.)

Lynn was fully active in worship at Friends Meeting at Cambridge. She was also a stalwart participant for many years in the Course in Miracles group that has met for years

on Saturday mornings at the Meeting. She deeply lived the admonition to “Teach only Love, for that is what you are.” She believed strongly in the spiritual nature of human beings: “I am not a body.” Toward the end of her life, she spoke graciously and authentically about her life ending soon— about the joyous adventure she anticipated of transitioning to another state beyond death.

In June 2018 Lynn experienced a large stroke. She recovered rather well physically and she was amazingly cheerful and gracious; her sense of humor was intact. But she had difficulty reading, writing and speaking, which she dealt with in her down-to-earth way— “not complaining, just observing,” as a friend said. She would say, “I don’t remember your name, but I know who you are.” When she was trying to get a thought out and got stuck, she would sometimes say any old word or word-like sound, trusting that her listener could substitute an appropriate English word. A second, massive stroke in August 2019 led to her death a few weeks later.

At the lovely Memorial Meeting that was held to celebrate Lynn’s life at Friends Meeting at Cambridge in November 2019, friends and family members remembered her with many loving and admiring messages. For instance:

- Lynn gave us space, but guided us when we needed it.
- She was a mentor who taught empowerment.
- Lynn was a mama bear. She was shy, but she would get in the mud with you, meet you where you were. She knew how to zero in on the center of her friends’ lives.
- The year between her strokes was a gift to all of us. She was serene, but not quite ready to go, because, “we have more work to do.”

- Ways I will miss Lynn: her cozy home, her welcoming, the way she cooked, snacking on what she put out in tiny bowls, her welcoming home, endless patience, inquiries about my work, talking about important people, talking about peace marches, Petsi pies and scones, big picture ideas, her plans for how I could change the world, ginger cookies, walking the walk, food cravings, efforts to stop smoking. She was a truly good friend.
- I am always meeting people who knew and loved Lynn. She helped teach me how to love unconditionally; she was truly genuine in showing her love and faith: “It will be okay—don’t worry.”
- She showed up for people; she felt it was a responsibility.
- She showed me how love can transform into justice.
- She was flexible but persistent.
- She taught me that kindness is a strength, not a weakness, and there is a ripple effect of her kindness and insight.

Lynn Lazar, how we miss you! We feel your kindness and love, your joy in doodles and paper cranes, rippling among us. You are with us.

## Memorial Minute for Ghanda DiFiglia

Ghanda Virginia DiFiglia grew up in Brooklyn, New York, in a large, close-knit Italian family. She spent many happy early years playing with cousins who would remain her close friends for life. She experienced Catholic grade school as quite rigid and stern, and it was a relief when she entered a secular high school. Her interests started to develop in history and civics, and she decided that a worthy and “faithful” life would be as a civic-minded citizen, taking action for justice and peace. In college, she developed a circle of friends who brought her joy and comfort throughout her life. Her early work with children with severe disabilities deepened her humanism by putting her in touch with the stories and experiences of others.

As an adult, Ghanda settled in the Boston area, where her work included careers as a teacher of special needs children, an educational writer, and a librarian. She retired as Department Administrator in the Philosophy Department at Harvard University. A poet and prose writer, Ghanda wrote several books, including a book of poetry and two children’s books. She served as coordinating editor for two books highlighting Unitarian Universalist leaders who worked on behalf of refugees during and after World War Two.

Ghanda joined FMC in March of 1985. Among the many roles that Ghanda played in the meeting over the years, she served as an interim Friend in Residence, in 1990, where she initiated staff meetings for mutual support. She served as Recording Clerk for two years, and was a steady and resourceful member of the clerk’s team. She served on Ministry and Counsel, with one year as co-clerk. Always concerned with the wellbeing and learning of children, she served on the Cambridge Friends School Trustees as well as serving the First Day School Committee for many years, often as co-clerk. She was a First Day School teacher, too, teaming up with Christel Jorgenson for several years to adventure together as teachers of the high school group.

Ghanda was especially interested in the intersection of faith and social action, and enjoyed dialoguing with congregations and other groups on that subject. In the 1980’s she was a founding member of the meeting’s Ad Hoc Committee of Concern for Central American Refugees. As a long-time member of the Peace and Social Justice committee (then “Peace and Social Concerns”), Ghanda’s service was legendary. As one Friend recalls, “she not only lent her gravitas as a well-grounded Quaker to the peace and social justice committee, but created the notes that helped us stay on track.” She created a new interfaith adult curriculum for peace education, gathered materials to support young people considering conscientious objection, and helped to initiate FMC’s monthly meeting for worship and witness in front of Textron, and later Raytheon, corporations that profit from creating weapons of war. A strong proponent of action for peace and justice, Ghanda was heard more than once to express impatience with Friends over the time it can take us to commit to social action.

Ghanda’s belief in the importance of dialogue across differences led her to spend time in Oasis of Peace, a cooperative village jointly founded by Israeli Jews and Arabs in 1972. She returned to inform us at FMC about the village’s intentional peace-making.

Ghanda brought her skills as an artist and writer to her work for peace. For more than a decade, she wrote the Good Friday Peace Witness pamphlet, each year broadening the concerns expressed to include the environment, racial justice, and concern about antisemitic themes in some portrayals of Holy Week. Collaborating with several FMC Friends, Ghanda produced,

wrote and directed a film on the ecological costs of war and preparation for war, called *Urgent Peace*. Of their work together on this film, one collaborator remembers that Ghanda “didn’t put in a word that she didn’t think a lot about.” Independent to the end in service of her abiding commitments, Ghanda traveled to an antiwar march in NYC after her diagnosis with cancer; her family worried about this trip, yet knew that she was being true to herself. As one Friend said, “Her commitment to peace and social justice reflected in her witness over so many years will continue to serve as an inspiration to many.”

In her seventies, Ghanda followed a leading to create a children’s book in which the three Wise Men, back home after their sojourn in Bethlehem, receive the gifts of faith, hope, and love to share with the people of their cities. The result was *Home from Bethlehem: A Story of the Wise Men After They Came Home*. As one Friend wrote: “Talk about being faithful! It took years and years to get that wonderful, profound story illustrated and published. Nevertheless, she persisted! What a gift to the world.” FMC children – and adults – return frequently to *Home from Bethlehem* for learning and inspiration.

Ghanda’s long list of loves included writing and singing, attending plays and musical performances, and connecting with children as playmate and teacher. She studied Italian, did extensive genetic and genealogical research on her family, and made several trips to Sicily to track down her family’s genetic history and to reconnect with long-lost relatives. She loved creating and savoring community, and enjoyed serving Italian dinners to gatherings of her wide intersecting circles of friends. As her niece Becca said, “The human connection was really strong for Gigi. Such a full Roladex! And she had so much going on!” Above all, Ghanda loved Becca and the family that they created together over many years, including Becca’s husband Josh and son James. She loved being a grandmother to James as he grew; she got down on the floor to play with him, and joined his wonder at their science adventures.

Friends remember Ghanda as “a self-effacing, proper, traditional person...a deep and deliberate thinker... .. passionate and meticulous about the facts... steadfast in wanting to tell the truth.” We relished Ghanda’s sense of humor. One Friend remembers: Ghanda and I were talking about meeting for business and how some people knit. She said, “I wonder how people would feel if I just set up an ironing board in the back and brought my ironing?” We laughed and laughed at the visual image of it. I loved how her nose would crinkle up and her eyes would dance.” And we felt her kindness: “When I was 8, my parents flew to China for two weeks to adopt my sister.. Ghanda agreed to care for me and my brother while they were gone. I have always had a soft spot in my heart for her and know it was because of how kind she was.” Another Friend prizes that “during her last months of illness, Ghanda demonstrated such consistent grace and caring about the welfare of others even as she was battling health issues of her own.” Friends might want to listen to this [this beautiful piece](#) celebrating Ghanda’s life based on the rhythms of the Stone of Hope drumming circle.

Ghanda died on Saturday, December 28, 2019, in Arlington, MA.. During her final illness, the FMC hospice choir came to sing to her, which was a profound experience: music had always brought her comfort, and it did so at the end. Becca and Josh were with Ghanda and relayed that she “passed away quietly, surrounded by love.” Becca spoke of how strengthened she felt by the caring and support Ghanda received from her FMC community.

We miss Ghanda. We seek to live up to her vibrant, deeply considered and persistent witness for justice and peace.



Mehmet Rona was born on October 18, 1939 in Adana, Turkey, the fourth child of Hikmet and Ziya Rona. Mehmet was curious and inventive child. His sons tell of young Mehmet building a box kite from a picture in a dictionary: “To many, this would have remained just a dream. But to my father, ideas demanded action. And with the minimal information that box kites existed and what they sort of looked like, he was able to build one. One can only imagine the scoffs turning to smiles of amazement when the box kite soared.” Mehmet lost both his older brothers when he was still young, and his father, Ziya, a pharmacist, passed away when Mehmet was 14 years old. Mehmet assumed the role of protector of his mother and sister for the rest of their lives. These formative experiences of loss shaped much of the remainder of Mehmet’s life, although, as his sons attest, he “never dwelled on how bad it was.” He met difficulties with resilience and humor.

Mehmet graduated from Robert College, an independent American high school in Istanbul, in 1961. A former Robert College classmate remembers him as “ a brilliant person with loveliness in his heart. He cared for everybody. He was born a teacher.” A family story tells of his next steps: Mehmet went to the beach on a day off from his work in a steel mill – work that built a stocky, weight-lifter strength in his body that lasted to the end. He learned of an entrance exam for studies at Princeton University in the far-away USA, took the exam without studying, got the top score, and received a full scholarship. He earned a PhD in theoretical physics from Princeton in 1966.

The wife of Mehmet’s thesis advisor at Princeton recalled, during Mehmet’s memorial meeting, that the first time he came over to meet his advisor, having learned that he and his family were Jewish, he apologized about Turkey’s neutrality until the very end of World War II. We hear in this story Mehmet’s balance of head and heart, the infusion of his academic brilliance with a deep, caring sense of responsibility to his fellow humans. He became a close part of his advisor’s family.

During his years at Princeton, Mehmet and Susan Rich met and fell in love with each other. They married in Istanbul in 1968, and had two sons - Yilmaz Rona (now of Upton) and Ilyas Rona (now of Chestnut Hill). They settled in Turkey, where Mehmet taught physics at Middle East Technical University in Ankara. A colleague from that time remembers Mehmet teaching elementary physics to two classes of five hundred freshmen each, and being tremendously well respected. “They were students from all over Turkey. These young men adored him.” According to his former Robert College classmate, “In Turkey people are still saying, “Mehmet! He was my professor!” Mehmet also loved mischief. On the day scheduled for a faculty photo, he posed as a Saudi mathematician in full head-dress and sunglasses, was given a VIP tour, and showed up in the faculty photo.

By the late 1970s, the political situation in Turkey became precarious. Middle East Technical University was at the center of the increasingly dangerous confrontations. When the president of the university stepped down, and no other faculty member had the courage to take on the role given the threat of violence from an extremist political group, Mehmet agreed to step into the political fray as acting president. In this role, Mehmet needed round the clock protection, and there were several attempts on his life. A colleague remembers that Mehmet “saved the university as interim director, with humor and great courage. He showed great bravery during

that difficult time.” Mehmet was famously absent minded, says his son Ilyas, but “his mind would be laser-focused on the right thing to do and his sense of duty when circumstances called for it.”

When the danger to their family became too great, Mehmet and Susan moved with their sons to Belmont, MA, where Mehmet joined the storied consulting firm Arthur D. Little in Cambridge (which became Tiax LLC in 2002). A gifted practical theoretician, he authored several published works on the physics of semiconductors and invented several patents, and rose to the position of vice-president. A caring soul, he helped his workplace community through difficult times, greeted coworkers with lively concern, gave guidance when asked, and served as Ombudsman for a number of years. One colleague from Arthur D. Little calls Mehmet “a perfect gentleman, and a mensch.” Another recalls seeing Mehmet in the halls: “He’d always check on us and ask about our careers. He was a trusted person in the organization.” Many ADLers remember him simply as their mentor.

In his forties, Mehmet suffered a serious motorcycle accident that left him with pain for the rest of his life and prompted a mid-life search for deeper meaning. Mehmet went through a challenging time internally. Despite his professional success and being so well-respected as a scientist and consultant, he longed for his life to have an impact that felt more meaningful to him. He separated from Susan in 1990, and moved to Cambridge. This longing also led him to deepen his religious quest, and to engage Christianity more and more fully. He thought to become a Catholic, and asked his close friend Michael Shanahan, whom he assumed to be Catholic, where he went to Mass. When Michael responded that he was a Quaker, Mehmet came to Friends, and found himself at home. He became a member of FMC in October of 2006.

In an interview with a student at the Harvard Advocate towards the end of his life, Mehmet put into words the dynamic faith at work in him as he sat in the meeting house, Sunday after Sunday, his well-worn Bible in his hand. “I am in love with God,” he told the young woman. My whole life, people have said I have a transparency for God. I leak my faith....My relationship with Christ is very intense. Meetings help me to organize that.” Friend Jessie Brown often recorded the words of Mehmet’s vocal ministry, so we can remind ourselves now of the messages that came through him.

Open your heart. Let God inspire you. Whether we conduct our life from fear or from hope is our choice. (2008)

How does one get better at this? I am expectantly waiting! (2009)

Can we remember for one another our own knowledge of the bright days, and rely on faith to remove the clouds? (2010)

I’ve heard this admonishment, “Walk cheerfully over the earth, seeking that of God in every one,” In my imperfect way, I hear it as an admonishment asking me to serve the needy, the hungry, the unloved. I hear it asking me to work on behalf of the community—and if I meet with failure, not to sulk, but to try again. (2010)

There are wars, injustices, unspeakable cruelty... And yet, I am here. I have the sense that God wants good for all. Can I serve that purpose by being kind, loving, forgiving, here? Without sermons, thick books, catechisms, we can draw close to God. (2010)

How do we prepare ourselves to be the pipe that resonates, that thrills to the mystery some call God, or Spirit, or the gathered meeting? We wait, listening, for that calling. It doesn't come always — but to make every attempt to make our souls ready, receptive, inviting to that tone, is our best chance.... (2012)

To serve God is not like climbing Mount Everest, and shoving in a flag so that you're proved good! It's a constant process of humility—more like crawling up a surface of ice, hooking fingers, scrabbling, and not becoming furious if you lose altitude. (2013)

One Friend has said, “His faith wasn't about definitions or theology. He was about love. I hope his messages have fallen on enough hearts that we will carry that message of love forward.”

Mehmet's service at FMC included a challenging stint on the Personnel Committee, to which he brought the wisdom of his experience as vice-president in a high-level technical consulting firm. He worried as this circle of non-HR-professionals tried to help FMC be a dependable, transparent and effective employer. During a particularly fraught period, when the committee struggled to do the right thing by both meeting and staff, he confessed that the task was grueling for him, “worse than a root canal.” Later, Mehmet led the Grants Committee, where he was devoted to helping FMC give of our abundance to those in need.

Mehmet was also a founding member of the Wednesday Night Sharing Circle, a weekly mutual support group of Quakers and non-Quakers, many of whom have been in prison. In the circle, he spoke often of loving everyone present. When a circle member was having a hard time or a legal difficulty, Mehmet would volunteer his time and money to try to help. A member of the circle remembers: “He gave us the carved wooden cane from the Philippines that we use as a talking piece; one of the Circle participants always said that this talking piece contained the stories of everyone who ever held it.”

Mehmet was a friend to innumerable ones of us at FMC. One Friend recalls that Mehmet reached out to him when he was new to the meeting and seeking a way to become part of things. “He took me by both my hands and blessed my presence here.” Another reports that “Mehmet was my spiritual friend and my protector. He helped me believe in myself and in what I was trying to do. He chose to help every possible way.” Mehmet had intense and intimate relationships in the meeting. In particular, he and Ann Foster experienced a deeply loving bond that endured over many years.

Mehmet's generosity was felt beyond FMC's walls. Those who socialized with him outside FMC report that he gave people money on the street, and regularly left half his meal at his regular restaurant for the waitstaff to give to nearby homeless people. He tutored at risk teenagers from East Cambridge, and work to end the constitutional deprivations wrought by our unjust bail system.

One of the more endearing aspects of Mehmet was his self-proclaimed imperfection, faults that he would own and humbly apologize for. Yet there was also in Mehmet a deep, private territory, an insistent, even stubborn, self-reliance, that even his closest intimates found it hard to get through to, but which they sensed was the source of much anguish and seeking in his life. This possibly traced back to the traumas of his youth and the loss of his brothers and father, leaving him as the sole protector of his mother and sister. It also made his final illness—that robbed him of both speech and movement—particularly difficult for him to bear.

Of this final illness, Mehmet's son Ilyas remembers that "to the very end, my dad kept his individuality. In his final year at the Wingate nursing home, he was unable to speak or walk, and yet even in a wheelchair he could be his imperious self. He even led my aunt on an unauthorized tour of the administrative offices. He was popular among staff and residents alike. He forged unspoken friendships with the diverse population that was there. Until the very end, he told you how felt with his eyes." Those of us who were able to visit with Mehmet in his last months are indelibly imprinted with the silent depth of those visits. As one Friend said, "Mehmet could speak without saying any words. When he looked at you it was almost unbearable, his visual transfer of love." To this day, people at Wingate speak of him with deep fondness.

Mehmet left his earthly body on October 26, 2019. In his three decades among us at Friends Meeting at Cambridge, we knew him to be courteous, compassionate, generous, and alive to his Christian faith. We experienced him as a complex, cherished, and cherishing, friend. We give thanks for his time among us, and are grateful that he is at peace.

"Mehmet was in an internal embrace: he loved God, and God loved him. He is in that deep embrace now."

**MEMORIAL MINUTE**  
**Joan L. Griscom**

Joan “Joanie” Griscom was born in Cambridge on May 26, 1930. She was educated at the Winsor School and Vassar College, earning three Master’s Degrees, one in English from the University of Minnesota, one in theology from Union Theological Seminary, and a third Master’s Degree from New York University. Joanie continued her education at New York University and was awarded her doctorate in Psychology in 1991. She was a dedicated professional, and her long career included serving as an educator and social worker with young adults, teaching college at William Paterson University, and research in Women’s Studies. Joanie published widely and was far ahead of her time in her enlightened understanding of issues of gender, sexuality and race.

Joanie loved music! She was a wonderful pianist and enjoyed playing Bach, Brahms, and Chopin, as well as Scott Joplin and Joseph Lamb. Her love of music was also evidenced in her deep commitment to choral music, singing both in professional and semi-professional groups. She sang for many years with Chorus Pro Musica and The Orpheus Singers, and had a lifelong association with the Longy School of Music. Joanie continued to study voice until shortly before she passed away, and shared her love of music both at FMC Women’s Silent Retreats and at Brookhaven. Joanie was delighted by her involvement in strengthening Brookhaven’s music program and she worked tirelessly with others to bring top quality guest musician’s to regularly perform there.

Joanie lived in Wanaque and Ringwood, New Jersey for many years and then chose to move to Brookhaven at Lexington where she had many deeply meaningful relationships with both residents and staff. She was an active and popular member of the Brookhaven community for 15 years. While at Brookhaven, she joined the local FMC worship group, subsequently becoming a member of Cambridge Friends Meeting.

Joanie had relayed that she had been drawn to Quakerism for years. She said that she had specifically reached out to FMC as a result of having read *An Epistle to Friends Meeting at Cambridge from the Meeting on Ministry and Counsel, May 16, 2010*. She shared that she had found the document very moving and that it spoke to her in a deep and personal way. Joanie

said that reading this document directly led her to want to become a member of Friends Meeting at Cambridge.

Joanie shared that she regretted not being able to come as regularly as she would like to worship at FMC, but sincerely valued her connection with the community, including serving for a period of time on the Care and Support Committee. She often drove with Chuck Woodbury, another FMC member residing in Brookhaven, to the Meeting for Worship at FMC. Joanie often said that she particularly cherished her times at the women's retreats, noting that she both valued the extended times of silence and the fellowship with women from FMC during these weekends together.

Her commitment to equality and social justice was apparent in her conversations. Joanie's innate curiosity led her to place an intense value on the benefits of open, frank and honest conversations, always ready to hear and explore ideas and deepen her own knowledge and understanding through conversations with others. Her extensive relationships spanned many generations and included people from all walks of life and from places all over the world. Joanie had a vast array of family members, both in her "family of origin" and her "family of choice." Joanie was predeceased by her former husband, Werner, and her devoted partner Marge. She was a member of numerous organizations and maintained contact with a wide spectrum of people. Joanie has been described as a "kind, wise, and delightfully unconventional person" and she described herself as someone who valued connections with family, friends and music more than anything else in her life.

Joanie passed away on March 2, 2017. Her love of family and friends, her passion for music, her commitment to deep and meaningful conversation, her intense commitment to women's issues, her desire for equality for all filled her life. Joanie's unquenchable joie de vivre will long live in the minds and hearts of those who had the pleasure of knowing her.

# Memorial Minute for Roger Webb

November 10, 1934 – June 10, 2019

At meeting for worship in the spring of 2019, an older, white-haired man struggled to his feet to offer ministry at the Cambridge Meetinghouse and began by saying, "I was born a Quaker and I want to die a Quaker..." After a long absence from the Friends community Roger Webb returned home to Meeting, where his membership was approved by Friends Meeting at Cambridge (FMC) on June 9th, 2019, just one day before his passing.

Roger began attending Friends Meeting at Cambridge shortly after he came to Harvard College in 1952 and joined the meeting in November of 1966. In 1967, as a witness against the growing U.S. war in Vietnam, the Meeting provided sanctuary for a man who was a conscientious objector to war and absent without leave (AWOL) from the military. Perhaps due to the Meeting's support of this act of civil disobedience reflecting the polarized politics of the day, or perhaps because his career and family began to take precedence, after a few years Roger drifted away from the Meeting, resigning his membership in 1979. Rejoining the Meeting 40 years later, Roger came full circle, returning to his Quaker childhood roots.

The youngest of four siblings, Roger was born into a Quaker family in Montclair, NJ on November 10, 1934 to Eleanor Miller and Nathaniel Conant Webb. During childhood he spent summers visiting family in Sandy Spring, MD, where he became immersed in his Quaker heritage. In the company of his "Gaga" (grandmother) and extended family, Roger attended First Day (Sunday) meetings for worship at the nearby 18th century Quaker Meetinghouse. He fondly remembered making up small games to entertain himself in the silence. Years later, in his adulthood, Roger returned to the Sandy Spring Meeting, where he was surprised to find it had been transformed from a rural farming community into a suburb of Washington and Baltimore.

After attending Montclair Academy and The Choate School, in Wallingford, CT, he graduated from Harvard College in 1958, with a two-year interlude in the U.S. Army from 1954 to 1956. He went on to Harvard Business School, graduating in 1961. Roger's marriage in 1959 to Anne Van Vleck, an art history major at Smith College, sparked his interest in historic architecture, the field which was to become his lifelong career and passion.

A pioneer in preservation real estate development in Boston, Roger established Restoration and Relocation Enterprises (RARE) in 1963, a historic preservation contractor engaged in adaptive building reuse and relocation. Among the projects he completed were the relocation of a Greek Revival style chapel to the Belmont Hill School and the relocation of numerous structures threatened with demolition to locations in Cambridge, Brookline and Belmont. In 1966, Roger established the Architectural Heritage Foundation to jointly conduct a feasibility study for the reuse of the Quincy Markets in Boston. That feasibility study created the framework for the subsequent redevelopment of the markets by the Rouse Company into what later came to be known as the Faneuil Hall Marketplace. Roger's signal accomplishment was working with Mayor Kevin White to preserve the recently vacated Boston City Hall building on School Street. At the time, little value was seen in historic buildings, with the city in the midst of a sweeping urban renewal movement. The successful rehabilitation of Old City Hall for commercial office use,

became a model for other preservation efforts and helped to ignite interest in historic preservation locally and nationally. Roger later helped to establish the non-profit revolving fund Architectural Conservation Trust, which evolved into Preservation Massachusetts, the state-wide advocacy group for historic preservation.

Throughout his life, Roger maintained vigorous physical health. Once, after being advised by a sports doctor to take up yoga, he sought instruction at a small personal growth center in Watertown with yoga classes taught by Jon Kabat-Zinn, the founder of mindfulness-based stress reduction. He later enrolled in a teaching program at the Kripalu Center for Yoga and Health and continued to practice yoga daily, for nearly five decades. He was last documented doing a headstand in February 2016, to the delight of many.

Roger's love of family and friends pervaded nearly every activity and was the generator of numerous group trips and adventures involving multiple families and generations. Group sailing expeditions to Maine or the Caribbean were a favorite, particularly if they included dancing to a steel drum band. At any family wedding Roger was often the last to leave the dance floor.

In retirement, Roger immersed himself in caring for grandchildren and took every opportunity to connect to the people around him. He continued to enrich his life by taking classes in painting, history and writing. Painting became a passion and he used his lifelong interest in the built environment to create voluminous travel sketches and paintings wherever he went.

Roger was a lifelong seeker. In his 80s, Roger participated in a series of creative writing classes, during which time he crafted a series of memory essays entitled *Cheers and Tears Over the Years: My Story*. In it, he wrote, "My retirement about ten years ago and my divorce brought me self-discovery. I spent a lot of time getting to know myself more deeply. ...my life is still a work in progress. Even at 80, I am still evolving."

Roger died peacefully in the care of hospice and his three daughters Rebecca, Mary and Ruth on June 10, 2019. A packed, joyous, and deeply moving memorial meeting for worship was held for Roger at the Cambridge Meetinghouse on July 13, 2019.

Roger is survived by his ex-wife Anne Webb, his daughter Rebecca Webb and her husband Christopher Heye of Belmont, his daughter Mary Webb and her husband Sean McDonnell of Cambridge and his daughter Ruth Webb and her husband Matthew Bellows of Cambridge, and his eight grandchildren Peter, Austin, Kate, Margaret, Claire, Anna, Nelson and Roy. He treasured his close relationships with his nieces and nephews.

## Memorial Minute for Patricia Anne Hogan

Patricia Anne Hogan was known by several names. Most of her family called her “Pat,” or “Auntie Pat,” Her school and college friends also called her “Pat.” Our meeting knew her as “Trish,” and later, as she spent several long sojourns in Ireland exploring her roots, she adopted the Irish version of her name “Padraigín Áine Ní Ógáin.”

Trish’s face was incredibly expressive, even transparent. On Sunday mornings, as she entered the meetinghouse, walking to her usual seat on the facing bench by the fireplace, a radiant smile would so often light up her whole face, and indeed the whole room would brighten. Trish wore her emotions plainly on her face — joy, consternation, empathy, worry, anger, love. As reflected in her face, she could easily move through any number of these emotions in a short space of time.

One of her relatives noted that “Auntie Pat” lived her life joyfully and had a curious, independent, adventurous nature. She didn’t like to sit still — she was always on the go, taking classes, going to contra dances, traveling, or riding her bike. She thought nothing of renting a car and heading down to Connecticut for a holiday or up to Vermont for a weekend.”

Born in 1937 in Boston and growing up in Melrose, Massachusetts, Trish surmounted all challenges while living a very full and overflowing life as a happy and content ‘single lady.’ In her twenties, she traveled extensively in Europe and Nigeria eventually finding her way to the Experiment in International Living with its mission of creating a more peaceful and sustainable world through international exchange. She continued working for other educational institutions and in the corporate sector. She fought gender and age discrimination her entire career. As a financial aid officer, she advocated for awards that would increase racial justice.

Later, she reinvented herself by marketing software for petroleum engineers and creating forecasting services for financial and corporate institutions. One of her last jobs before retirement was working for Friends Meeting at Cambridge as the Meeting Secretary.

Her religious and spiritual life was grounded in Quakerism, Alcoholics Anonymous, and Irish Catholicism. She began attending Friends Meetings in the 1960s while living in Maryland. When she moved back to Massachusetts, she joined the Beacon Hill Friends Meeting in the early 1980s and transferred her membership to Friends Meeting at Cambridge in 1987. She was active in New England Yearly Meeting, serving on the Finance Committee and the New England Friends Home Committee. She was a member of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) for 42 years. And, in her later years, she reconnected to the Irish Catholic spirituality of her youth, spending several summers in Ireland.

At age 49, Trish was diagnosed with chronic lymphocytic leukemia and lived an amazingly full life for the next 31 years. Her illness did not slow her down or stop her from doing things. She often shared her updates, conversations, and the research and guidance she would get from her oncologist and dear friend Lidia Schapira. Lidia writes of their friendship in an article, “Finding Ways to Celebrate the Joys of Living Over a Cup of Tea.”

“Trish was one of my first patients. I was fresh out of specialty training in hematology and oncology, and Trish chose me as her doctor. Together we embarked on the long journey of managing an incurable illness. There were good years, when her leukemia was indolent and watchful waiting was the best approach. When the disease was stable, we had the luxury of talking about life, poetry, and travel during our routine clinic visits. Trish was fearless. She accepted her illness at age 49 and had decided to live her

days as fully as possible and with confidence. Her mother had lived with the same disease for a couple of years before she passed at the age of 82.

“Trish taught me about coping with adversity and illness. It is absolutely true that oncologists learn about life, grief, and loss from their patients, and Trish has been my best teacher. I saw her move past the shock of receiving bad news time and time again. I watched her arrive at a state of peaceful, comfortable acceptance of what could not be changed. It was a state coupled with the determination to do whatever was necessary to keep on living as well as possible.”

Trish did not slow down when she retired at the age of 62. Her love of books and poetry led her to the Harvard Institute for Learning in Retirement where she taught and studied the literature of William Faulkner and William Butler Yeats, as well as the poetry of Jorie Graham, Seamus Heaney, and John Ashbery.

A founding member of the Cambridge Cohousing community in 1998, she was an active and engaged participant there until her death. If she was sometimes quick to vent frustration during the ups and downs of community life, she was as quick to acknowledge and reconcile. She showed a particular and generous concern for the children of the community as they grew.

A few years before she died, she began planning her memorial meeting. She was absolutely clear that she did not want the usual Quaker memorial meeting. The idea of people speaking out of the silence in remembrance of her just seemed way too placid. She wanted the memorial to be a celebration of life. She wanted (and got) a Celtic harp player, lots of music, singing, poetry, even preaching. And yes, she did eventually agree to include a few minutes of silent waiting worship. And people did speak, so very movingly, about her.

When she knew it was time to let go of the twice-weekly treatments that were keeping her alive, she faced death with courage and grace. She assured everyone that she was in a good place and everything was going to be okay. She was ready. Over the next few weeks, a stream of visitors came by her bed at Elizabeth Evarts de Rham Hospice in Cambridge. Some would read to her, some would just sit quietly, and some would engage her in deep conversation about whatever was on her mind at the moment.

Trish knew she was loved and embraced by so many — her family, her co-housing community, her medical community, her Quaker community, her dear friends, and of course, by the love of Jesus. She was often in awe of the support and she truly felt blessed

Trish died on July 4, 2018, held in love by her friends and family.

To: Permanent Board

From Susan Davies, Clerk, Permanent Board

Date: December 5, 2025

Subject: Memorial Minutes

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Advance Documents for the December 13, 2025 meeting of Permanent Board (PB) include 11 memorial minutes, only three of which are submitted to PB for approval at this meeting: Nancy First, (Northampton), Lucy Townsend, (Hartford), and William Ray Taylor, (Hartford). Also posted in Advance Documents and linked here is 2017 guidance on preparation of memorial minutes [Memorial Minutes Guidance](#).

The rest of the memorial minutes are posted for a First Reading, not for approval at the December 13<sup>th</sup> PB meeting. They represent about 1/3 of the 21 memorial minutes recently assembled by Friends Meeting at Cambridge (FMC) on their discovery that these minutes had not been forwarded, or approved by the Salem Quarter, nor Permanent Board for inclusion in NEYM Sessions memorial meetings. FMC has now faithfully submitted this collection of minutes but the minutes are lacking dates of monthly meeting approval. Also, some formatting corrections are needed so that they will ultimately be suitable for inclusion in the NEYM archives. The balance of these FMC minutes will be posted in PB Advance Documents for the February 28<sup>th</sup>, and the May 9<sup>th</sup> PB meetings with the expectation that all will be in final, approvable form by May, and prior to the Sessions Advance Documents deadline. Please review the FMC memorial minutes posted for this meeting with the understanding that formatting edits and inclusion of approval dates are in process.

### Writing a Memorial Minute

The process of writing a memorial minute starts in your meeting's Ministry & Counsel committee. The committee may choose other members of the meeting to do the writing, but M&C should approve the minute before it is presented to meeting for business.

### Purposes of the Memorial Minute:

- To let Friends know the person, to help Friends benefit from the spiritual lessons of the life memorialized.
- To give thanks to God for Grace as expressed in the Friend's life.
- To comfort the Meeting and the Friend's family by honoring their beloved Friend. •

### Some Do's and Don'ts for Memorial Minute authors:

#### Don't:

- Polish the life and hold up the person as a shining example. ("Saint, n.: A dead sinner, revised and edited." - Ambrose Bierce)
- Include information just because it's factual. You may omit details of education, professional life and extended family. This is not an obituary.
- Memorialize the spouse, parents or offspring. Not "from '47 to '54, -'s spouse worked at Raytheon." but possibly, "While -'s spouse worked at Raytheon, - joined Friends protesting the military-industrial complex, outside the gates."

#### Do:

- Remember that memorial minutes require a tender sensitivity as well as a disciplined focus on the spiritual journey of the deceased.
- Give clearly and succinctly the flavor of the life as well as illustration of how the person's qualities and achievements were demonstrated in his/her life among Friends. • Go far: failings, weaknesses, needs, are part of Friends' gifts to us. Remember "the general killeth, the particular giveth life." "...served on Fellowship committee." is weaker than "- 's preparation for worship most Sundays included setting up the coffee and tea. When that was perking, - could sit with us, deeply centered."

### Consider the following queries:

- How does the inclusion of this information in the memorial minute reflect the movement of the spirit in this Friend's life?
  - What gifts of the spirit did this Friend bring to the meeting? To the wider community? • How did this Friend's service in the Yearly Meeting reveal the light within or the light in others? When we consider our spiritual journeys what part did this Friend play in them?

### Before you write a memorial minute:

**Line up your resources:** Talk to people in your meeting. Talk to family. Call the Yearly Meeting office and ask how this Friend served the Yearly Meeting. If this Friend is a transfer, ask prior meetings.

**Work as led.** Spirit will move you in the right direction – to know what to include or omit – to know how to present facts so that truth is served.

**Allow time** for your meeting's Ministry & Counsel to season the work.

**Expect changes.** Your monthly meeting is likely to ask for changes. Try to be grateful for their

interest.

Memorial Minute Guidelines for Yearly Meeting – draft, 3rd mo. 2017

## **NUTS AND BOLTS – The process a memorial minute goes through**

**Editing → possible review by other meetings, institutions → approval by monthly Mtg.**

The group in your Meeting that handles Ministry & Counsel issues starts the process (see “Writing a Memorial Minute.”) Your **Monthly Meeting for Business** needs time to season a memorial minute. Circulate it widely. You may want to read it at two consecutive Meetings for Business before you forward it to your Quarterly Meeting M&C if there is one or directly to Quarterly Meeting. Meetings are encouraged to send **all** Memorial Minutes through the Quarterly Meeting to Permanent Board.

**Acceptance by Quarterly Meeting → Endorsement and forwarding to Permanent Board**

Usually hearing Memorial Minutes will just be part of the business of Quarterly Meeting. See “Memorial Minute examples” for examples of endorsement. If Quarterly Meeting feels that something essential has been omitted or some confusion has arisen, it may refer the Memorial Minute back to the Meeting, or mention the item in the endorsement, or undertake slight editing.

**Acceptance by Permanent Board → forwarding to the editing committee and Yearly Meeting Ministry & Counsel.**

Permanent Board hears Memorial Minutes before or at the Permanent Board Meeting in May or June. Check the calendar at [neym.org](http://neym.org) for Permanent Board meeting dates. Permanent Board doesn't endorse or approve Memorial Minutes but may include guidance for the editing committee when it sends the minutes to YM Ministry & Counsel and to the editing committee.

**Editing Committee review and preparation for publication.** A booklet is prepared to be distributed at Yearly Meeting Sessions including all Memorial Minutes that have been forwarded. What the editing committee does is described below.

**Ministry & Counsel** determines how Memorial Minutes will be presented at Sessions. (Details below.)

**WHY SO MANY STEPS? Can't a memorial minute just be sent to the NEYM office?**

We make many opportunities for Memorial Minutes to be heard because we believe that hearing about the lives of these Friends is vitally important to our spiritual nurture.

And more of us will hear a Memorial Minute each time it is read. Sometimes this enriches the Memorial Minute. A Quarterly Meeting may add particularly cogent memories that arise from hearing the minute, as may Permanent Board.

**And what is the editing committee?** The editing committee prepares Memorial Minutes for publication. Dates, spelling of names and facts are checked just one more time. Sometimes an awkward sentence may be recast. The text is formatted consistently. (And, very rarely, based on their impact on the individual's spiritual life or presence, some details may be omitted or added.)

**How will the Memorial Minutes be presented at Yearly Meeting?** Currently, all Memorial Minutes are presented in a printed booklet that you can pick up at the Annual Sessions of the Yearly Meeting. Yearly Meeting Ministry & Counsel, in response to the leadings of the spirit and the constraints of the sessions schedule, discerns how the minutes, or selections from them, will be presented each year.

## **Some examples**

### **General Format:**

**James (Jim) Nayler**

**June 10, 1937 – November 5, 2013**

*if a quotation is used as the heading, it should be in italics and centered or indented.*

*Author, work, at right*

Jim Nayler was born, lived and died in England. In his professional life, Jim worked as a medical researcher. In preparation for this life of service, he studied at Harvard Medical School where he earned a PhD in biochemistry. ...

The body text of the minute is left justified. Leave a blank line between paragraphs.

His competence was both a gift and a practice. We saw it reflected in his personal life as well. ...

Approved by Waverly Monthly Meeting, March 29, 2015. Edward Burroughs, clerk

Endorsed by Oceanic Quarterly Meeting, April 26, 2015. Margaret Fell, clerk The

above shows a memorial minute with a simple endorsement.

### **A longer endorsement might be something like this:**

Endorsed by Oceanic Quarterly Meeting, April 26, 2015, Margaret Fell, clerk, with this addition:

We were reminded of the profound influence Jim had on our young people, when a Friend shared that his deep listening and presence in leading worship sharing at an elementary retreat when she was a sixth grader first opened Quaker worship to her.

Memorial Minute Guidelines for Yearly Meeting – draft, 3rd mo. 2017

**Informational Report to the Permanent Board from the Israel-Palestine Resource Group (IPRG)**

**December 3, 2025**

**Submitted by Leslie Manning, Clerk I-PRG; *edited by PB Clerk, Susan Davies***  
**12/10/25**

There is no ceasefire. The killing continues. The devastation increases, the aid is not allowed. And yet, faithful people on the ground continue to provide relief, report on the conditions and struggle to provide comfort and care to those most in need, often while their own families are displaced, killed or injured.

And, they welcome our help and look forward to a time when some of us can join them. “Come,” they say “And go back and tell them what you see.”

The Israel-Palestine Resource Group of NEYM, under the care of the Permanent Board, has met twice since the called meeting of October 18. At that meeting our group was charged with **Minute 25-\*3 (proposed)**:

**The meeting charged the Presiding Clerk, the Clerk of Permanent Board and the Israel-Palestine Resource Group to convene to explore, in consultation with those with experience in the region and who could provide context on the ground, the idea of sending witnesses to Gaza from the Yearly Meeting. After this consideration, this group will bring a recommendation forward to Permanent Board for their discernment. Friends approved.**

Members of the NEYM Resource Group<sup>1</sup> met with additional Friends, familiar with the region and the complex issues, including Martha Yager, (Providence), Linden Jenkins, (North Sandwich), Petra Doan, (Brunswick) and Steve McKnight, (Wellesley and Interim Clerk of Quakers Advocating Justice for Palestine). Together this consultation group further consulted with Kerri Kennedy, (Associate General Secretary, International American Friends Service Committee (AFSC)); Max Carter (FUM Living Letters, Guilford College, retired) and Jonathan Evans and Melissa Graf Evans (Middle East Collaborative of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting).

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<sup>1</sup> NEYM Members of the Resource Group: Leslie Manning, Durham, Skip Schiel, Cambridge, Bob Watt, Providence and Phil Veatch, Presiding Clerk *ex officio*

**We have found unity that it is not safe or feasible to send anyone to Gaza at this time.**

### **Additional Ways We Can Help**

Instead, we want to focus on travel opportunities that are available within the next few months to the West Bank, provide an update on possible **AFSC initiatives in Gaza** for the future and recommend additional steps that may be taken to support "courageous action" and witness in the region. Kerri Kennedy, AFSC, is proceeding with a plan to bring long-term aid to Gaza through the establishment of work service camps, modeled on those from the post world wars periods, to offer humanitarian relief work. Prior to these being established, there will need to be an assessment by trained and experienced humanitarians of the needs, and a training program established under the guidance of those with specific skills and knowledge for volunteers to participate. Her hope is that this can be done in the next 3-6 months, depending on the situation on the ground in Gaza and the AFSC relationship with the Israeli government. We will continue to monitor this proposal.

There is also the possibility of working with the Civilian Peace Force in the West Bank.

Jon and Melissa (Middle East Collaborative of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting) are planning **a trip to the area, under the auspices of Friends Council on Education** in March, 2026 (approximate cost is \$4,000/person, without airfare)

<https://www.friendscouncil.org/programs/traveltopalestine-israel>. Petra (Brunswick Friends) participated in one of these trips and recommends it highly; this is geared to faculty, administrators and those connected with Friends schools.

There are **other opportunities to travel with other faith groups**, such as the Catholic Workers (Bob Watt will be going in December), Sabeel (Linden participated on one and is available to speak about her experience) and we will work to identify others in the coming months.

New England has a long history of involvement in the West Bank, and we suggest that we take up the work of **solidarity with and support for Ramallah Friends School** and the Meeting, in an attempt to form the kind of connection we currently share with Friends in Cuba through Puente de Amigos. For example, the Vassalboro Quarter maintains the Eli and Sybil Jones Scholarship Fund

- The Eli and Sybil Jones Ramallah School Scholarship Fund of Vassalboro Quarterly Meeting is raising funds to continue to support scholarships as they have for over 14 years. Checks can be sent to Cynthia Harkleroad,

Treasurer, Vassalboro Quarterly Meeting, PO Box 69, Bowdoinham ME  
04008-0069. Please note "Ramallah Friends School" in the memo line.

What could support for Ramallah graduates and alumni look like if they are living, studying and/or working on this continent? The school itself has undertaken an endowment campaign and is raising funds to offset the loss of USAID funding, "Foundation for Tomorrow" <https://www.rfs.edu.ps/en>

**Max and Jane Carter have another trip planned** for June, 2026 to the school and the area and it is already full; they are recently back from a trip in October to assist with the olive harvest and report that they had no trouble getting in or out of the region.

Finally, as documented in the news brief below, there is more to witness than travel to the region; there is the **on-going work of educating, mobilizing and resisting here**, in our own cities and states and with our nation's ongoing complicity, using our tax dollars indiscriminately to support the policies of the Israeli government. At what point do we say No, not in my name?

On November 17, [the UN Security Council formally adopted President Trump's 20-point Gaza peace plan \(UNSC Resolution 280\)](#) with 13 votes in favor and abstentions from Russia and China. The plan mandates the establishment of a "Board of Peace" to guide Gaza's reconstruction and transition, and authorizes a temporary international force to stabilize the region. Meanwhile, President Trump publicly urged Syria and Saudi Arabia to normalize ties with Israel in conjunction with a high profile visit to the White House by Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman. Israeli forces conducted several airstrikes across Gaza on Saturday, [killing at least 20 people and wounding dozens more](#), as reports from the ground indicate Hamas is regaining influence in several Gaza neighborhoods.

from World Week in Review  
World Affairs Council of Maine  
11/23/25

Informational report to Permanent Board  
December 2025

### **Meeting Care Day**

Submitted by Nia Thomas, Program Director ([Nia@neym.org](mailto:Nia@neym.org)) and Elizabeth Hacala, Operations Director ([Elizabeth@neym.org](mailto:Elizabeth@neym.org))

We held our fourth annual Meeting Care Day event on November 15, 2025. Meeting Care Day is a day-long in-person gathering, specifically focused on service to one's local Quaker meeting or community. The event is centered on training and consultation, with space for worship, lightly structured full group time, and informal connection-making.

Because Meeting Care Day is an in-person only (not hybrid) event, we take care to rotate the location from year to year so the event is more easily accessible to Friends from different meetings each time. This year we held the event in the Greater Boston Area at First Parish Church in Bedford, Massachusetts.

The workshop topics for Meeting Care Day arise from areas of interest for local meetings named during the June *Meeting for Listening*. This year, we were able to run three workshops:

- *Emerging Conversations in Ministry and Eldership in Our Meetings* (led by Janet Hough with members of the Ministry and Eldership Resource Group)
- *Quaker Group Discernment: Clerking, Recording, and Active Participation* (led by Phil Veatch with presentations by members of the Archives and Historical Records Committee)
- *Setting the Table for Newcomers* (led by Nia Thomas featuring a panel with Phil Fitz, Emily Mason, and Regina McCarthy)

Members of the Nominating Committee also offered to lead a *Best Practices in Nominating* workshop but due to low enrollment we did not run the workshop and instead the facilitators shared materials and offered individual conversations to the registrants.

Meeting Care Day continues to grow. This was our largest Meeting Care Day yet with sixty-seven Friends registrants coming from twenty-nine local meetings and worship groups. The Ministry and Eldership workshop was especially large with almost 30 participants. Across workshops, formal and informal feedback was consistently positive and we continue to keep listening for how the event impacts local meetings in the months to come.

As Meeting Care Day matures as a part of our program cycle, we are putting increased care into the full-group moments that bookend our time together. These shared spaces where we worship, eat, sing, and connect informally are where the overarching purpose of the day comes

fully into view. Meeting Care Day is more than a vehicle for workshops or a place to share resources. Friends leave with a renewed sense that our service in our local meetings is part of a collective journey. We move into the year ahead reenergized, encouraged, and grateful.

The Rt. Hon. Mark Carney, PC, MP  
Prime Minister of Canada

**Re: U.S. Faith Community Calls on Canada to Uphold Fundamental Protections and Offer Safe Haven to Asylum Seekers**

*CC: The leaders of Canada's Federal Political Parties and People of Faith in Canada*

Dear Prime Minister Carney,  
Dear friends across Canada,

The undersigned U.S. faith-based organizations and U.S. faith leaders write in solidarity with people of faith in Canada, joining the call to urge you to uphold and strengthen protections for immigrants and asylum seekers and abandon harmful efforts like the proposed Strong Borders Act (Bill C-2/C-12) and the ongoing Safe Third Country Agreement (STCA) that aim to close the door on those seeking safety at the U.S.-Canada border.

In the U.S., harsh immigration policies have shattered lives and denied human dignity. These policies are at the root of the migration challenges at our shared border. We cannot ask Canada to solve these challenges, and we continue to fight every day in our communities and in the halls of power for just and compassionate immigration reform and to ensure all immigrants are treated with dignity.

But we have heard the call of alarm from faith leaders that Canada's government is preparing to retreat from its long legacy of welcome and intends to follow in the Trump administration's footsteps in increasingly draconian immigration, deportation, and border enforcement efforts. We write in solidarity with our neighbors to the North and to urge you to reverse course.

The Strong Borders Act (Bill C-2/C-12) represents a fundamental threat to the rights of refugees and migrants. The bill includes provisions that would restrict the right of some in need of protection to make any claim for asylum at all, and would severely limit due process for others. The bill goes beyond the current Safe Third Country Agreement to shut the door entirely to arrivals from the U.S. unless they meet limited exceptions; and creates new time-bars for refugee claims. The bill also provides broad powers to initiate mass pauses or cancellations of immigration documents.

It is with growing concern that we note disturbing parallels with an increasingly restrictive immigration regime in the United States. Our diverse faith traditions compel us to love our neighbor, accompany the vulnerable, and welcome the sojourner. We are called by our sacred texts to approach one another with love – not fear – and to affirm the value and dignity of all.

For the sake of people in need of international protections, we urge you to:

- **Withdraw Bill C-2 and C-12, the Strong Borders Act.** We have seen the repercussions of harsh refugee and asylum restrictions and urge you to abandon efforts to undermine international refugee protections and scapegoat migrants.
- **Abandon the Safe Third Country Agreement** and ensure Canada remains open to asylum seekers and other uprooted people who are in need of protection and support.

The values of our faith, both in Canada and the US, call for the implementation and allowance of a vision that welcomes the sojourner not with violence and animosity, but with concern, welcome, and protection. Borders should not stop the compassion and inclusion we are to have as nations and as people.

**We implore our friends in Canada and its governing leaders, to meet this moment by allowing Canada's doors to remain open to people who need protection.**

Thank you for Canada's leadership and support for refugee rights in the world community, and thank you for considering this urgent appeal.

Sincerely,

### **Faith-based Organizations**

American Friends Service Committee  
 Church World Service  
 Church of the Brethren, Office of Peacebuilding and Policy  
 Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd  
 Downtown United Presbyterian Church Justice Ministry  
 Franciscan Action Network  
 Greater New York Labor-Religion Coalition  
 Haitian Bridge Alliance  
 Hobe Border Institute  
 JAMAAT (Jews and Muslims and Allies Acting Together)  
 Jesuit Refugee Services USA  
 Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns  
 National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd  
 New England Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)  
 United Methodist Church General Board of Church and Society

### **Faith Leaders and Persons of Faith:**

Dawn Albanese, Elk Grove Village, Il.  
 JL Angell, Rescue, Ca.  
 Kristine Bartanen, New Journey Lutheran Church, Fountain Hills, Az.  
 Mary Bowler, Pax Christi, Lakewood, Ca.

Rev. Dr. Christian Collins Winn, Calvary Baptist Church, Minneapolis, Mn.  
Thomas Conrad, Religious Society of Friends, Philadelphia, Pa.  
Sister Liane Delsuc, Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, Phoenix, Az.  
Pavityr Deol, Round Rock, Tx.  
Diane Dicranian, Midcoast Monthly Meeting Friends, Bath, Me.  
Reverend Carla Dietz, United Church of Christ, Sacramento, Ca.  
Theresa Flynn, Secular Franciscan Order, Raleigh, Nc.  
Joyce Frohn, First Congregation Oshkosh, Oshkosh, Wi.  
Professor Denise Gilman, Austin, Tx.  
Sister Kathleen Hebbeler, Dominican Sister of Hope, Cincinnati, Oh.  
Sister Lillian Long, Sisters of St Joseph, Berlin, Nd.  
Sister Marie Lucey, Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia, Greenbelt, Md.  
Sylvia Manning, Northeast Kingdom Quaker Meeting, Barton, Vt.  
Nancy Markowitz, Washington, Dc.  
Jason Miller, St Martin's Catholic Church, Saint Augustine, Fl.  
Nancy Obyrne, Sisters of St. Joseph Associates,  
Christine Payden-Travers, Winston-Salem, Nc.  
Erma Perkins, Rush United Methodist Church, Rush, Ny.  
Reverend Christine Reesor, Community House Church, Takoma Park, Md.  
Kelly Ryan, Jesuit Refugee Services/USA (President), Washington, Dc.  
Brother Mark Schroeder, San Damiano Retreat, Danville, Ca.  
Andrea Sechrist, Red Lion, Pa.  
David Sulewski, Boston, Ma.  
Suzanne Susany, Pittsburgh, Pa.

**FOOD FOR GAZA — QUAKER ACTION PACKET (NOV & DEC 2025)**  
**NYYM Working Group on Peace with Justice in Palestine/Israel (PJPI)**

Dear Friends, PJPI lovingly requests that you organize an action in your Quaker Meeting or community focused on food and aid for Gaza. Feel free to use any of the following ideas, or other ideas you have.

**Information Sharing**

- More than 440 Palestinians have starved to death in Gaza over the course of the genocide, including 147 children.<sup>1</sup> The IPC declared a famine in northern Gaza in August 2025.<sup>2</sup>
- 90 percent of Gaza's population continue to suffer varying degrees of malnutrition due to Israeli restrictions on humanitarian aid, per UNRWA. Doctors Without Borders has described the situation in Gaza as dire and accused the Israeli government of obstructing the entry of medical supplies and shelter materials, even as displaced Palestinians' tents deteriorate in overcrowded camps, exposing them to the elements and disease as winter approaches.<sup>3</sup> UNICEF has also said that Israel continues to prevent infant formula from entering Gaza.<sup>4</sup> One in 10 children screened in Gaza are still acutely malnourished (thankfully, this is down from 14 percent in September), per the UN humanitarian agency OCHA.<sup>5</sup>
- Under the terms of the October 10, 2025, ceasefire, Israel must permit at least 600 trucks to enter Gaza per day. The U.S. claims that 674 trucks have entered Gaza daily since the ceasefire; however, the UN World Food Programme says only half the required food aid is reaching Gaza, and a coalition of Palestinian relief agencies says aid deliveries amount to just one quarter of what was agreed under the ceasefire deal. Meanwhile, Palestinian authorities in Gaza claim that only 171 trucks have entered daily.<sup>6</sup>
- Such restrictions on humanitarian aid are illegal under international law, specifically the laws of war contained in the Fourth Geneva Convention on occupation.<sup>7</sup> In fact, occupying powers must provide aid.
- Israel blames food shortages on Hamas, accusing the group of stealing aid before it can be distributed. Hamas denies this accusation.<sup>8</sup> Israel previously admitted it is arming gangs that the UN says are stealing aid, such as the Abu Shabab gang.<sup>9</sup> A Sky News investigation reveals that Israel is backing four armed groups, including Abu Shabab, to seize control of the Gaza Strip from Hamas and is stationing them in the Israeli-controlled, depopulated eastern half of Gaza beyond the so-called Yellow Line.<sup>10</sup> The U.S. is reportedly planning to only permit reconstruction in this area.<sup>11</sup>
- New U.S. coordinators managing Gaza post-ceasefire have allowed Israel to continue obstructing aid.<sup>12</sup>
- Since the ceasefire, Israel has attacked Gaza nearly every day, killing at least 300.<sup>13</sup> This includes a massacre on October 29 of 109 people (52 of whom were children) after an exchange of gunfire in Rafah that killed one Israeli soldier. Nearly 70,000 Palestinians have been killed in total since October 2023, with thousands still under the rubble, unaccounted for. That is to one out of every 33 people in Gaza.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [Israel starving Gaza: 440 dead from starvation, including 147 children](#), Al Jazeera, September 19, 2025.

<sup>2</sup> [Famine confirmed in Gaza Governorate, projected to expand](#), Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, August 2025.

<sup>3</sup> [90% of Gaza's Population faces malnutrition amid severe aid restrictions, UN warns](#), MEMO, Nov. 13, 2025.

<sup>4</sup> [UN Warns of 'Humanitarian Catastrophe' in Gaza - 90% Facing Malnutrition](#), The Palestine Chronicle, November 14, 2025.

<sup>5</sup> [Not enough tents, food reaching Gaza as winter comes, aid agencies say](#), Reuters, November 4, 2025.

<sup>6</sup> [US highlights Gaza aid surge: Palestinians allege 'engineered starvation'](#), Al Jazeera, November 9, 2025.

<sup>7</sup> [Rule 55: Access for Humanitarian Relief to Civilians in Need](#), International Committee of the Red Cross.

<sup>8</sup> [Not enough tents, food reaching Gaza as winter comes, aid agencies say](#), Reuters, November 4, 2025.

<sup>9</sup> [Israel said Hamas was looting aid — then it armed the gangs who were actually stealing it](#), Australian Broadcasting Corporation, July 13, 2025.

<sup>10</sup> [Revealed: The plan for a 'New Gaza' - and the four militias Israel is backing to defeat Hamas](#), Sky News, October 25, 2025.

<sup>11</sup> [US military planning for divided Gaza with 'green zone' secured by international and Israeli troops](#), The Guardian, November 14, 2025.

<sup>12</sup> [Hobbled by obstruction and uncertainty: Gaza's post-ceasefire aid response](#), The New Humanitarian, November 20, 2025.

<sup>13</sup> [Israeli airstrikes kill 33 people in Gaza in escalation of post-ceasefire attacks](#), The Guardian, Nov. 20, 2025

<sup>14</sup> [How many times has Israel violated the Gaza ceasefire? Here are the numbers](#), Al Jazeera, Nov. 11, 2025.

## Film Screening

- [Gaza: Hunger as a Weapon](#) (27:00) (English subtitles), ARTE.tv, October 10, 2025: an investigation into the declaration of famine in Gaza and use of starvation as a weapon of war.
- [Lifelines](#) (15:00), American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), April 15, 2025: a short film following two humanitarian aid-workers as they provide relief to displaced Palestinians in Gaza amidst the genocide.
- [Starving Gaza](#) (25:00), Al Jazeera Fault Lines, September 29, 2024: a frontline view of a doctor in Gaza treating severely malnourished children while under siege.

## Fundraising – Possible Organizations

- [Rebuilding Alliance](#): provides humanitarian relief in Gaza, including hot meals delivered directly to the homes of the poorest families.
- [American Friends Service Committee \(AFSC\)](#): a Quaker service organization providing emergency aid to Palestinians in Gaza since the 1948 Nakba. Join AFSC's amazing weekly [Action Hour](#) on Fridays at noon ET!
- [UNRWA](#): the largest humanitarian organization in Gaza and a UN agency that supports the relief and human development of Palestinian refugees.
- [World Central Kitchen \(WCK\)](#): has prepared tens of millions of meals for people in Gaza who do not have enough to eat.

## Fasting

- In solidarity with Palestinians who continue to face malnutrition, consider organizing a fast in your Meeting or community. The fast could be for a day, for sunrise to sunset, for a few days, for however long you are led. Or maybe it's a low-calorie meal like [mujaddara](#), one cup of which is about the 245 calories per day that [Oxfam](#) estimates people in northern Gaza have had per day.
- Be public about your fasting, whether online using #FastforGaza or with a physical sticker (e.g., name tag) saying why you're fasting.
- Invite others to join with a message like this one based on an [AFSC](#) campaign: *I am calling on you to join me [specify timeframe] in fasting in solidarity with the people of Gaza, who continue to be denied access to food by the Israeli government, with 90% still facing malnutrition. To protest this, I am eating no food and drinking nothing but water from sunrise to sunset. I hope my small symbolic act encourages an end to this terrible and preventable catastrophe.*

## Postcards for House Reps

- [Find](#) your representative & their address (local address is better than DC). [Check](#) if they have co-sponsored H.R. 3565 (if so, thank them).
- Print off 4" x 6" [cornucopia](#) or [winter](#) postcards from our Friends at FCNL on cardstock paper (14 point is safest for home printers), and buy a book of postcard stamps from the post office. Leave these with a sign in your Meeting/community.
- Alternatively, print the cornucopia image on regular paper and write a regular letter.
- Also use this Action Network tool to contact your reps re: opening the [East Jerusalem Hospital Network](#) for medical evacuations.

