

Bucks Quarterly Meeting for Worship for The Purpose Of Business  
 19th Day, Eleventh Month, 2023  
 Hosted by Quakertown Friends Meeting in person and Zoom

#	Agenda Item	Person	Suggested	
			Start	Time
1	Opening Worship		1:00 PM	5
2	Welcome & review and approval of agenda	Bill Daly	1:05 PM	5
3	Role Call of Meetings	Terry Christensen	1:10 PM	5
4	Review and Approval - Minutes	Terry Christensen	1:15 PM	5
5	Stories of Vitality & Strength		1:20 PM	10
6	Report: Friends Village	Chiyo Moriuchi	1:30 PM	10
7	Budget and Nominating report	Leo Fitzpatrick	1:40 PM	5
8	Report - Quarter Coordinator	Wendy Kane	1:45 PM	10
9	Report - Audit Committee	Alan Gray	1:55 PM	10
10	Lancaster Minute	Carol Ann Gray	2:05 PM	5
11	Report - Treasurer	Lisa Parry Becker	2:10 PM	5
12	Report - Bucks Food for Friends	Carol Richardson	2:15 PM	5
13	Break		2:20 PM	10
14	Report: Bristol Meeting Support Committee	Fallsington Meeting	2:30 PM	5
15	Annual Report: Solebury Meeting	Marian Hepburn	2:35 PM	5
16	Annual Report: Plumstead Meeting	Leslie May	2:40 PM	5
17	Annual Report: Newtown Meeting	Katherine Borish	2:45 PM	5
18	Annual Report: Peace Fair Committee	Tim Cunningham	2:50 PM	5
19	Announcements		2:55 PM	5
20	Closing Worship		3:00 PM	5
21			3:05 PM	

Reminder: next Quarterly Meeting is 18th Day, Second Month, 2024 at Solebury Meeting

*The suggested times for agenda items are offered to guide us in our work  
 These suggestions should never hinder, however, the expression of the Spirit among us*

**Bucks Quarterly Meeting for Worship for The Purpose of Business**  
**20<sup>th</sup> Day, Eighth Month 2023**

Held under the care of Plumstead Meeting

**Clerk:** Bill Daly (Middletown)

**Bucks Quarter Coordinator:** Wendy Kane (Newtown)

**Recording Clerk:** Terry M. Christensen (Newtown)

**Friends gathered** at 1:03 PM and settled into a period of worship.

**Welcome** – Bill Daly

**Review and Approval of Agenda** – Bill Daly - **APPROVED**

**Roll Call of Meetings:** Bristol – 3; Buckingham – 1; Doylestown – 0; Fallsington – 6; Lehigh Valley – 4; Makefield – 1; Middletown – 3; Newtown – 10; Plumstead – 11; Quakertown – 1 ; Solebury – 2; Southampton – 4 ; Wrightstown – 2; Yardley – 3.

**Review and Approval of Minutes from May 2023 Quarterly Meeting** – **APPROVED**

**Stories of Vitality & Strength** –

Lehigh Valley Friend reports that Lehigh Valley Meeting has a presence at Lehigh Valley Pride Day, which is taking place today; they are making use of the “Quaker Table in a Box” supplied by the Quarter.

Middletown Meeting Friend reports that this year they will again celebrate World Quaker Day (October 1<sup>st</sup>) with shared worship with Friends from Settle Meeting in the UK beginning at 9AM with Fellowship at 10AM (via hybrid).

Bristol Friend reports that their labyrinth is progressing nicely and that they are confident that it will be ready for the Historic Bristol celebration.

Southampton Friend reports that Southampton Meeting recently participated in “Southampton Days” carnival (with the assistance of Friends from other meetings); this event seemed to be an effective outreach effort and, in any case, generated a sense of community.

Yardley Friend reports that they will be holding their 67<sup>th</sup>(!) annual Flea Market on Saturday September 9<sup>th</sup>. There will be 96 vendors, a Quaker tent, delicious food, and music. Also, they note that their labyrinth is always available.

Fallsington Friend reports that they will be building on the success of their recent presentation of a “Quakerism in a Nutshell” class and offer a “Quakerism 102” class in September. They are considering offering both courses next year as well.

### **The Future of Bristol Meeting – Melanie Douty-Snipes, Jim Fine, and Paul Shaffer**

Friend Fine reports that Bristol Meeting (currently a preparatory meeting under the care of Fallsington Meeting) is about to lose their member who serves as Treasurer. Moreover, their long-term Clerk, Paul Shaffer, is facing a professional relocation. This circumstance would leave Bristol (which currently meets for worship once per month) with no members or attenders. Friend Fine noted that Bristol is very, very secure financially and there are ample protections to secure guaranteed income for the foreseeable future.

On the positive side, two members of Newtown Meeting are transferring to Bristol (via Fallsington meeting since Bristol is a preparatory meeting). Also, Redemption Church (who rents the meetinghouse) has agreed to be responsible for maintaining the Bristol meetinghouse and grounds. Redemption Church is committed to the spiritual health of the Bristol community. Friend Fine reports that Wendy Kane has been instrumental in this discernment.

Fallsington Friend notes that Fallsington Meeting is still discerning its role in this collaboration; since there are/will be only two people in Bristol Meeting, what are the implications of this arrangement going forward.

Buckingham Friend asks about process; Bristol Friend discusses contract that has been drawn up.

Falls Friend notes that every month, some Fallsington Friends will be worshipping at Bristol.

Southampton Friend wonders about insurance; Bristol Friend notes this question has been addressed.

Wendy Kane notes that one of the soon-to-be members of Bristol has agreed to serve as Clerk of the meeting.

Fallsington Friend wonders about their role and the Quarter going forward; what is our responsibility toward very small meetings?

Newtown Friend points out that Quarter had similar concerns about Southampton Meeting in 2006.

Yardley Friend reports that early in 2000s, Friends Sid Cadwallader and Sam Snipes used to regularly attend Princeton Meeting when its future was uncertain; Princeton Meeting is now thriving. Yardley Friend further notes that Friends from Yardley Meeting will be happy to offer periodic attendance and support.

Wendy Kane wonders if Bristol can meet more often; Bristol Friend replies that more frequent meetings are possible.

Clerk Bill Daly consults *Faith and Practice* (F&P) and notes the leadership requirements for a meeting.

Fallsington Friend believes that it would be useful to have a visioning session focused on the future of Bristol meeting. Clerk Daly questions can we form a committee to discuss custodial issues of very small meetings?

**APPROVED**

**Committee Report – The Ad Hoc Technology Group – Richmond Shreve** (equipment list attached).

Friend Richmond Shreve opens his report by noting that technology opens our doors to those who cannot attend and enhances our inclusivity. Friend Shreve presented a list of equipment that will be necessary to stage a hybrid quarterly meeting. This list includes, among other components, microphones, a camera, a camera tripod, a projector, speakers, a projection screen, a USB mixer, a wireless hotspot, a laptop computer, a power source, and various cables. The total cost for this package is estimated to be \$4,631.

Discussion ensues. Buckingham Friend wonders what is the critical number of people to hold a hybrid meeting? – Ans: there need be only one person on-site; the Zoom host can be anywhere.

Friend wonders if an Ad Hoc Tech Group representative can be present to help a meeting set up? Ans: yes.

Clerk Daly asks if we want to commit to purchasing the requisite equipment.

Wendy Kane notes that we also need volunteers to operate the equipment.

Southampton Friend notes that Quarter will require several such volunteers.

Newtown Friend notes that if meetings wanted to commit to hybrid, they would have done so by now.

Plumstead Friend wonders how many meetings require extra equipment? Ans: Eight meetings (of 14 total).

Makefield Friend notes that individual meetings should have the choice of whether or not to offer hybrid option for Quarterly meetings.

Yardley Friend wonders if we have an obligation to carry the meeting to seekers from afar.

Buckingham Friend suggests that we can organize carpools for Friends who cannot drive.

Wrightstown Friend notes that they have members that regularly participate from afar.

Bristol Friend notes that we lean very heavily on volunteers; we should consider compensating a tech crew; this is also an opportunity to engage with younger Friends.

Fallsington Friend notes that technology has uses beyond Quarterly meeting.

Newtown Friend suggests an audio only approach.

Clerk Daly notes that high quality microphones are a necessity.

Wendy Kane notes that we have suffered poor audio quality in the past.

Quakertown Friend reports that they have no WIFI.

Fallsington Friend suggests that we move forward with purchasing request equipment.

Clerk Daly suggests that Ad Hoc Tech Committee examine what is required if we do audio only.

Newtown Friend notes that soon, Newtown Meeting's old equipment will be available and that with an appropriate WIFI hotspot, the old Newtown Meeting equipment could be used at next the next Quarterly Meeting

### **APPROVED**

#### **Quarter Coordinator Report – Wendy Kane (report attached)**

“Outreach” is a concern of many Friends these days. Most meetings are looking to reengage with members and seekers who have forsaken meeting attendance and/or fellowship. There is a particular concern about the return of young families and their children back to meetings. Meetings are exploring website improvement, the use of social media, engagement in community events, and signage on their properties. Quarterly Meeting has been very proactive in helping monthly meetings achieve these goals. Moving into fall – with the resumption of adult and children’s First Day programs, we hope this will be an opportune time to renew our bonds to our Quaker communities and take part in the spiritual nurturing and fulfillment we find therein.

Wendy Kane notes that Quarter is the only quarterly meeting with a coordinator. She has been wondering about the history of the coordinator position; it would be interesting to know whom has held the coordinator position in the past.

Wendy Kane reports that visiting meetings in the quarter is the highlight of her position; she especially enjoys attending various meetings for business.

Wendy Kane reports that everyone present had a WONDERFUL time at Friends Fun Picnic at Tohickon Valley Park. Wendy Kane notes that this location is very near the geographical center of Bucks Quarter. We will probably repeat this event at the same location next year.

Wendy Kane reports that Quarter Clerks continue to meet quarterly. The July Quarter Clerks meeting was attended by clerks from 8 (of 14) monthly meetings. Discussion topics included websites and having the expertise and volunteers to administer and maintain current content.

Wendy Kane reports that she is now incorporating a QR<sup>1</sup> Code into various documents. For example, there is a QR code that links registration for the Quaker Driving Tour.

**Budget & Nominating Committee:**

Wendy Kane notes that she will get into specifics of Budget and Nominating later in the meeting.

**Outreach Committee:**

Outreach met as scheduled on July 18th, via Zoom. Highlights from that meeting include printing Quaker Meetinghouse Driving Tour signs for 4 meetings, an overview of the outreach grants given for FY 22-23, presentation of an updated version of the popular "Pick the Quaker" activity, and approval for the coordinator to schedule a meeting of outreach and communication contacts across the Quarter.

**Coordinator-Clerk Meetings:**

In its annual review, Bucks Quarter Oversight Committee identified a goal of having the Quarter Coordinator meet with the Clerk of each monthly meeting. This past quarter, Wendy Kane met with Lisa Uchrin of Quakertown and Lance Mervine of Middletown.

**Yearly Meeting & Other Quaker Organizations:**

Wendy Kane accepted a second (final) term on the PYM Program Committee. She will continue as clerk of that committee.

Wendy Kane took part in a Friends Village Visioning Session regarding Paxson Hall (which is located in the heart of Newtown Borough). Friends from Yardley, Plumstead, and Newtown meetings also participated.

On July 23rd, Plumstead Meeting hosted a program, "The Lenape People in Pennsylvania", a presentation by Adam Waterbear DePaul. The event was very well attended. Wendy Kane reports that there was standing room only in the Plumstead Meetinghouse.

**Inreach – Care of Meetings:**

Wendy Kane reports that visiting monthly meetings and sharing worship with Friends is the best part of her job. This past quarter, Wendy Kane visited Solebury, Fallsington, Makefield, Quakertown, Wrightstown, Doylestown, Southampton, Plumstead, Lehigh Valley and Bristol.

The Friends Are Fun Picnic lived up to its name. Wendy Kane estimates that 75 Friends (representing 12 meetings), gathered at Tohickon Valley Park on June 17th for food, fun, and fellowship. This event was the first Quarter-wide picnic that Friends could recall. This site was chosen to encourage our Friends from the northern tier of meetings to attend which they did – much to the delight of all.

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<sup>1</sup> A "QR", or "quick-response code", is a type of two-dimensional matrix barcode that is used over a very broad context. For example, QR codes are employed in commercial tracking applications and, increasingly, in convenience-oriented applications aimed at mobile-phone users (termed mobile tagging). QR codes may be used to display text to the user, to open a webpage on the user's device, to add a vCard contact to the user's device, to open a Uniform Resource Identifier (URI), to connect to a wireless network, or to compose an email or text message.

Quarter Peace Fair Committee:

The Peace Fair Committee continues holding monthly meetings. Wendy Kane made an advertising video for the Peace Fair which is available on the Quarter YouTube Channel. The Peace Fair Committee is looking for more robust attendance by Friends and to that end, they will track attendance by distributing "Genuine Quaker" pins to anyone who visits the Quaker Tent.

PYM Annual Sessions:

PYM held its 343rd Annual Sessions on July 26th through July 30th, at The College of New Jersey. Wednesday and Thursday were in a virtual-only format, while Friday and Saturday were held in a hybrid format. Wendy Kane had the pleasure of introducing opening night Keynote Speakers, Tucker and Sameer Manchanda, of Newtown Meeting.

The Thursday day session was focused on Meeting for Business while the evening centered around a virtual version of "Quaker Jeopardy". Wendy Kane stayed overnight at TCNJ and was able to spend time in fellowship with Friends from around PYM.

Wendy Kane reports that PYM staff were well-prepared, and business was handled in a spiritual manner by the presiding Clerk. Saturday evening featured more fellowship and activities such as line-dancing.

The next gathering of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting will be continuing sessions at Arch Street Meetinghouse on Saturday, November 11th.

Bucks Quarter Outreach:

Wendy Kane announces that Bucks Quarter Outreach Grants: are available to every monthly meeting for FY 23-24.

Wendy Kane has made a special effort to post more stories of vitality on the Quarter website. These have also been posted to the Quarter Facebook page. Links to these pages are included in each issue of Quakerphernalia in the hopes Friends will visit the website.

Quarter Facebook postings continue on a regular basis.

**BREAK**

**Annual Report – Middletown – Lance Mervine (Clerk Daly substitutes for Friend Mervine; see attached report)**

Middletown Meeting continues to offer virtual meeting for worship (via Zoom) for those unable to attend in person.

They have invited their young Friends to help with meeting events such as their annual auction and the hosting of Bucks Quarterly Meeting (which Middletown hosted February 2023). Involving young Friends in these capacities has been appreciated. A young Friend has also volunteered to be trained to operate the audio and video equipment used to facilitate hybrid meetings.

Middletown meeting supports Bucks Learning Cooperative (BLC), a self-directed learning center for home-schooled teens. Two Meeting members serve on the BLC board and the BLC staff, students, and parents presented a well-received program at the February 2023 Bucks Quarterly meeting.

This past year, the Meeting Clerk was contacted by representatives of the Rainbow Room. This group is supported by Planned Parenthood and provides a safe space for LGBTQ youth to gather for fellowship and support. However, an ad hoc committee discerned that the physical space available would not meet Rainbow Room's needs, and further, the Rainbow Room would deprive Meeting of a First Day School room. This difficult discernment was disappointing to a number of Friends. A letter of support for Rainbow Room was drafted and shared with Bucks Quarterly Meeting, the Rainbow Room, Planned Parenthood, and the state senator for Middletown Township.

Meeting continues to be active in efforts to reduce its carbon footprint and preserve the environment.

Meeting is an active member of the Langhorne Area Ministerial Association (a/k/a the Ministerium or LAMA). Meeting participates in the annual Good Friday Cross Walk and Thanksgiving Eve service.

As has become the custom, the Good Friday Cross Walk began at Middletown meetinghouse with brief worship in the manner of Friends. The Meeting Clerk actively participated in planning for the event, including arranging for shuttle busses from Pennswood Village to transport participants back to their vehicles. Other Meeting Friends provided baked goods and refreshments for those who walked. Meeting received many compliments from participating congregations and Friends were glad to have participated in this event.

Meeting continues to explore opportunities for outreach and ways to grow membership.

**Special Report – FY 22-23 Outreach Grants – Wendy Kane (see attached report)**

Wendy Kane reports that the following meetings received grants in support of their outreach efforts:

**Fallsington** received funding for a social justice singer/songwriter concert series.

**Lehigh Valley** received funding to purchase a space at Lehigh Valley Pride 2023.

**Middletown** received funding to purchase audio-visual equipment to improve the quality of hybrid meetings.

**Newtown** received funding to hire an audio-visual consultant to discuss improving hybrid worship.

**Solebury** received funding to improve their website.

**Southampton** received funding to cover the cost of equipment that would improve hybrid meetings, such as a projector, screen, laptop, microphones and stands.



**Wrightstown** received funding to purchase audio-visual equipment to improve the quality of hybrid meeting; will be using last year's and this year's for the purchase of an OWL (automatically adjusting camera / microphone device).

**Yardley** received funding in support of its "Summer of '23" movie series.

**Treasurer's report – Lisa Parry Becker** (see attached report)

Our income and expenses for the fourth quarter of our fiscal year are close to budget. One meeting has not contributed the amount pledged, therefore we have a 5% shortfall (\$13,825) in meeting contributions. This will generate an overage in next year's budget. Advertising for Quakerphenalia is also 11% (\$137.50) below the budgeted expectation. In sum, our "gross profit" is 95% of budgeted expectation for this quarter.

For the fiscal year ending on June 30<sup>th</sup>, we have bank accounts totaling \$25,605.41. and Also, we have assets in Friends Fiduciary Corporation totaling \$50,301.85. Therefore, our total of equities and liabilities is \$75,907.26.

Also, after the end of the fiscal year, we received an insurance dividend which Quarter is disbursing.

Middletown Friend proposes Minute of Appreciation for Treasurer Lisa Parry Becker.

**APPROVED**

**Annual Report – Southampton – Stephen Moyer** (Friend Carolyn Michener substitutes for Friend Moyer; see attached report)

Southampton is a small but busy meeting. Southampton meets for worship twice each week; on Sunday morning (from 10 to 11AM) and on Tuesday evening (from 7:30 to 8:30 PM) using hybrid technology. While attendance is less than hoped for, they have, on occasion, been blessed by a visit from a family with a toddler.

Southampton continues to hold weekly vigils for Social Justice at the [busy] corner of Street Road (PA 132) and Gravel Hill Road. The vigil is held at 4 EDT and at 3 EST after the daylight savings time adjustment. Participants at the vigil include members of Southampton Meeting as well as neighbors from Upper Southampton Township and surrounding towns. The third(!) anniversary of their first vigil occurred in June 2023. In honor of this longevity, folks gathered at the Meetinghouse for a covered-dish meal and a "picture show" of photos taken three years before.

Southampton Friends Meeting continues to support the broader community. They provide low-cost meeting space for two Narcotics Anonymous chapters. Additionally, they offer space to Welcoming The Stranger (an organization which teaches ESL and does citizenship preparation). This past year we have also rented space to a group from a nearby church that needed a safe, third-party meeting room to air LGBTQ issues that were damaging their social structure.

On the third Sunday of each month Southampton gathers for forty-five minutes of discussion prior to Meeting for Worship. Over the past twelve months, they have discussed the pamphlet “Race, Systemic Violence, and Retrospective Justice” by Dr. Harold Weaver (Pendle Hill #465) and begun discussions on “The Testimony of Integrity in the Religious Society of Friends” by Wilmer A. Cooper (Pendle Hill #296). These discussions are insightful and seem to attract attenders.

Like many Friends meetings, Southampton is facing the issue of aging facilities that require significant repair. Southampton Meeting has two buildings; a one-story meetinghouse that dates to 1968 and another three-story building (often referred to as “the House on the Hill) which dates to the 1920’s. This past year, they replaced the electrical panels in both buildings and installed a new HVAC system in their meetinghouse. These renovations will provide more comfort in the summer months and lower utility costs in the winter.

Friend Jim Michener has been very busy upgrading their meeting library.

Southampton Meeting is thoroughly engaged in Outreach. Their efforts have been enhanced by a grant from Bucks Quarterly Meeting (to which they expressed appreciation).

This year, Southampton Friends Meeting participated in “Southampton Days” (a carnival held in Tamanend Upper Southampton Park the first week in July). Using grant funds from Quarter, they rented a table at this event and staffed it with Quakers from Southampton, Wrightstown, and Newtown meetings. Wendy Kane provided Quaker flyers and handouts.

This event was a rousing success. Several visitors to the table asked, “Are you the people who do the vigil on Street Road?” Other conversations generated a sense of community.

Southampton Friends Meeting, after a prolonged discernment, has joined P.O.W.E.R. This organization is an interfaith, multi-racial, people’s movement of Pennsylvania congregations and individuals committed to racial and economic justice on a livable planet. It conducts campaigns in areas of education, justice, economic dignity, civic engagement, climate justice and justice reform. Southampton believes this will prove to be a very fruitful collaboration.

#### **Annual Report – Wrightstown – Irv Thompson (report attached)**

In the past year, Wrightstown has worked hard to recreate the sense of community that they enjoyed before the pandemic.

To that end, they are working to integrate the Nursery School families into their meeting. Wrightstown. To that end, the nursery school staff have established a vegetable garden for the Nursery School children and their families to tend.

Wrightstown reports that they have a solid core of attendees, averaging 25 – 30 people at meeting for worship.

They are preparing to celebrate their 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary later this year.

Wrightstown meeting is seeking a PYM Membership Development Grant to improve the audio amplification for those members who have hearing issues.

Wrightstown has changed their leadership structure by creating a 5-person “clerk’s team” which consists of, the presiding clerk, the recording clerk, the recorder, a rising clerk, and a past clerk. Initial indications are that this model has great potential. So far, we see that the duties can be naturally divided according to the gifts and leadings of the individual team members and that the job of clerk can become less burdensome.

Wrightstown has installed technology to improve the audio and visual experience for remote attenders as well as those attending in person. In this context, they have benefited from outreach grants from Quarter.

The Wrightstown Recorder confirmed that at the end of 2022 the Meeting had 196 members, down from 200 at the end of 2021. These include 175 members, 6 members under 21, and 15 associate members. Within the Meeting community, there have been four marriages and one birth. There were no further deaths in 2022 since those noted in last year’s Annual Report. They are sad to report that Anne Alden died in February 2023.

#### **Committee Report – Budget and Nominating – Wendy Kane**

Budget and Nominating has brought forward the name of Terry Christensen to serve as the Bucks Quarter representative to the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Nominating Council.

**APPROVED**

#### **Annual Report – Yardley – Marna Matthews (see attached report)**

Yardley Meeting has been focused on outreach this past year. They have slowly built back the number of people attending meeting for worship. While they have had many engaging events for families such as “Movie Night” and “Game Night”, they have not enjoyed sustained attendance from younger families. This is attributed to the absence of an active children’s group.

They have had good success with their electronic arrangements for hybrid meetings.

Although their Religious Education committee has worked to develop lesson plans appropriate for a broad age range, attendance by children has been sporadic. They have difficulty planning activities for children because of the difficulty finding pairs of volunteers. They are currently offering First Day School twice per month.

Yardley’s Adult RE programs are offered once per month.

Over the past two years, Yardley has had problems with the flooring that was installed as part of the remodeling of their meetinghouse. The contractor had, evidently, used the wrong adhesive and the floor tiles continued to come loose. Ultimately, Yardley

retained an attorney to negotiate with the contractor. This issue seems to have been resolved.

Yardley meeting offered support to St. Andrews Episcopal Church in Yardley when several of the LBGQT banners displayed at St. Andrews were vandalized. Yardley Friends sent a letter of support to the St. Andrews congregation and posited signs similar to those that had been vandalized on their grounds adjacent to North Main Street in Yardley. They also continue to display two banners on their front porch: "Welcome" and "Love thy Neighbor – No Exceptions".

This past May, Yardley celebrated the opening of their new Labyrinth.

This past year, Yardley meeting mourned the loss of four members: Maury Benbow, Ruth Blattenberger, Laura Clappison, Rose Koch, and Graham Leonard. Each of these Friends had contributed much energy, love, and fellowship to the community when they were active here. Yardley meeting also hosted a memorial service for a member that had passed away in 2021.

On a happier note, Yardley member Sarah Crofts and Kirk Gosweiler were joyously wed under the care of the meeting at the Yardley Meetinghouse in May

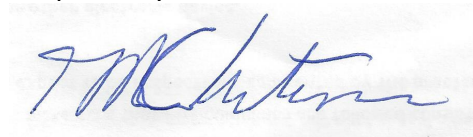
#### **Announcements –**

Recording Clerk Christensen requests that future annual reports of monthly meetings include a Recorders report. More specifically, and from a historical context, it would be helpful for monthly meetings to report gains and/or losses in membership, the number of adult and young Friends, and the average attendance at meeting for worship.

Southampton Friend asks if it would be useful to amend their report via email; yes.

**Closing Worship** – After a period of silent worship, the Clerk adjourned the meeting at 3:38 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,



Terry M. Christensen, Recording Clerk

#### **Addendum 1:**

Middletown Recorder, Jerry Belew, reports that Middletown started 2022 with 86 members, 83 of whom were over 21 years of age, and 3 members were under that threshold. Over the course of 2022, Middletown gained two members and had one resignation. Also two members reached the age of 21. Middletown meeting began 2023 with 87 members, one of whom is under 21 years of age.

## Annual Report to Bucks Quarterly Meeting November 19, 2023

### Who we are:

Since 1897, the “Friends Boarding Home of Bucks Quarterly Meeting” has been putting Quaker belief into practice. Friends Village’s small size gives it a distinctive, family-like character. We enjoy a dedicated staff with very low turnover - so every member of the community is well known. While our board is self-perpetuating (i.e. NOT appointed by the Meetings in the Quarter), it is still primarily comprised of Quakers (6 Quakers, 5 from Bucks Quarter).

### Strategic Mission:

FV’s mission is more important today than ever. Throughout our history we have provided community living for those of modest means. Policy makers and senior housing developers have largely ignored this segment of the population.

### Why choose Friends Village?

FV works to keep its residents independent. Social ties are important for overall wellness. Moving to a residential community is a proactive step to maintain mental and physical health and your independence. Our goal at FV is to empower residents to manage the inconveniences of aging, so they can maintain their autonomy and dignity.

FV is a rental model. We provide simple, comfortable, functional, and attractive accommodations and amenities. FV helps its residents with transportation, housekeeping/maintenance, and meals – the kinds of things all of us need periodically, and older friends need more often. Residents of FV’s personal care apartments also receive help with Activities of Daily Living (“ADLs”) and medication management.

### The challenge

Our challenge is how to provide the support and care that may be needed, at an affordable cost, AND provide fair wages to the caregivers. Monthly charges only cover 65% of operating expenses and none of the necessary capital expense to maintain our physical assets.

This is a matter of equity. First, our staff deserve fair compensation. Second, the availability of affordable alternatives is critically important to families who would otherwise bear financial penalties of withdrawing from the workforce or reducing their own earnings to care for aged relatives.

The availability of an affordable alternative in many cases also helps preserve family relationships.

### Strategic Initiatives and 2023 Highlights

FV has been making steady progress on our strategic plan. Some highlights for the year were:

- Wellness and Engagement
  - o Enhanced programming led by our new Community Wellness and Engagement Coordinator

- Community
  - We continue to host Free technology classes for residents and the wider community as the Bucks County Senior Planet licensee with 38 non-resident attendees so far in 2023. These classes are taught by our volunteers: Claire Staffieri of Newtown and Marna Matthews and Tyler Hoff of Yardley Meetings.
  - We participated in Porchfest and Newtown's Market Day.
  - This fall, we hosted the third season of our Growth and Change discussion series. We had a terrific four-part series called Unexpected Heirlooms. The first session was a panel moderated by Ted Taylor of Yardley Meeting, followed by individual sessions with our three presenters: Rabbi Gaber of Brothers of Israel on Ethical Wills, Robin Moore on Storytelling and Mimi Blackwell of Friends Fiduciary on Planned Giving.
  - Other Growth & Change programs were on Preventing Senior Scams, Native Women and Allies Speak, and just recently, Forgotten Heroes - Women and the Fight for the Right to Vote. We had 29 non-resident attendees of our Growth and Change programs.
  - Year to date, other programs open to the public included: Body Art, See a Flower/Draw a Flower taught by Carol Ashton-Hergenham (Newtown Meeting), Write it Out with Terry Culleton (Wrightstown Meeting) and Yoga for Seniors. These have been shared with 19 non-residents as well as 13 residents.
  - In June, we had a workshop to brainstorm ideas about the future of Paxson Hall with volunteers from a range of constituencies. Our facilitators were from VOICE, an international network started by the UK's National Innovation Centre Ageing and Newcastle University which aims to bring new thinking and innovation to the development of products and services in a world where we all live longer and better. VOICE stands for Valuing Our Intellectual Capital & Experience. FV is now a founding member of VOICE in the US.
  - In July, FV hosted a Bereavement Camp for children who had experienced trauma.
  - Outreach to the Quaker community – we visited with Solebury and Trenton Meetings.
  - Re-started Meeting for Worship at the Styer Campus which had stopped during Covid.
- Being a Great Place to Work
  - Enhanced employee compensation package by adding a 401(k) and an Emergency Loan program.
  - Leadership and staff participated in SAGE training to ensure Friends Village is a welcoming and inclusive environment for the LGBTQ community.
  - Average tenure for FV staff is over 7 years. Our Leadership team is particularly stable. One member celebrated her 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary with FV this year, while two others marked 15 years with the organization.
  - Professional development for staff: Health Coach certification for Laura Hornyak and Personal Care Home Administrator for LaChanta Gatling.
- Stewardship
  - Year to Date we have completed over \$350,000 of capital projects - mostly grant funded. Projects included the renovation of the Carriage House and installation of campus WiFi at the Styer Campus. The Carriage House is our oldest building since it was originally constructed to care for the horses working on the construction of Paxson Hall. The renovation included complete refurbishment of the two first floor studio apartments



## Friends Village

which are some of our most economic units, as well as a new roof, repainting the exterior and rebuilding the cupola.

- We planted a scion of the Salem Oak tree on the Styer Campus.
- We are eliminating single use food delivery containers.
- We continued work on architectural and engineering studies to support our planning – this time looking at Paxson Hall.
- We have developed a Planned Giving program and materials. (Please participate!)

### Telling our Story

- We installed new signage with our updated name and logo.
- We held a rainy Picnic in the Garden in April. In spite of moving indoors, we had over 106 non-resident attendees who enjoyed lunch, vendors and speakers/workshops.

### Coming up

- Every other Wednesday (next on 11/22) Meeting for Worship at 1:30 on the Styer Campus. Please Join Us.
- December 2<sup>nd</sup> Paxson Hall will be on Newtown's Holiday House Tour
- In the spring, we will have new terms of Senior Planet and Growth & Change
- Save the Date: Saturday, April 13<sup>th</sup>. Details to come, but we will have an event with a keynote delivered by renown speaker/author and professor, Doug Tallamy, founder of Homegrown National Park and author of Nature's Best Hope among other books on native plants and what we can each do now to fight climate change and promote bio-diversity.

### Your Support is Needed:

- 1) Consider FV for yourself, your family, and/or your friends. Come visit!
- 2) Provide Meeting Financial Support and Individual Donations. No money, no mission!
- 3) Support our residents' spiritual and emotional lives.
- 4) Volunteer. Share your time and talent. Our residents would be happy to meet you. Especially to teach Senior Planet.
- 5) Work for us. From time to time, FV has open positions, particularly for part-time.
- 6) Recommend candidates to join our Board. We are particularly interested in those with legal, health (mental, social/emotional, and medical) and financial expertise.

Respectfully submitted,  
N. Chiyo Moriuchi  
CEO/Executive Director  
November 19, 2023

**FACT SHEET**  
Data as of 9/30/23

**UNITS**

Business Line	# of units	# vacant	% occupied	Current # of residents
Personal Care	18	4	81%	13
Paxson Cottages	14	2	86%	13
<b>Paxson campus total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>84%</b>	<b>26</b>
Styer – West Wing	11	1	91%	10
Styer – Cottages	27	2	96%	28
<b>Styer campus total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>94%</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Friends Village total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>89%</b>	<b>64</b>

- No skilled nursing; No secure dementia unit
- Residents must be ambulatory and able to independently evacuate in case of emergency

**RATES:** 2023 monthly rates range from \$2,450 to \$4,385 with community fees at entry from \$7,200 to \$44,000

**SERVICES:**

**Personal Care** – 3 meals/day; Medication Management; Assistance with hygiene, laundry, housekeeping

**Independent Living** – 1 meal/day; Bi-weekly housekeeping and annual major cleaning. Maintenance of building & appliances; Groundskeeping; Security; Extra services available for additional fee.

**RESIDENT PROFILE:**

	Personal Care	Paxson-IL	Styer-WW	Styer-IL	FV Total
Male : Female	4:9	5:8	3:7	10:18	21:40
Average Age at Entry	85	83	84	80	83
Range of Ages	69-96	77-95	76-99	71-97	69-97
Avg Age of Residents	87	87	87	85	87
Avg Length of Stay	2.7	3.1	2.8	4.2	3.2
Longest Stay	5	9	8	27	0.0-27
# Quaker	0	1	0	4	5

**ORGANIZATION:**

Annual Total Operating Expense (2023 Budget): \$3.4 million

Sources of Income (2023 Budget):  
 8.6% - Application & Entrance Fees  
 64.7% - Room & Board (100% private pay)  
 5.3% - Grants/Donations/Misc  
 21.5% - Endowment/Investment

Employees- Full Time / Part Time / LPT/ FTEs: 16/8/11/25 (+Food Service: 7)

CEO/Executive Director: N. Chiyo Moriuchi (since August 2019)

Year Founded: 1897 Paxson Hall: 1899 Styer Campus: 1981

Board: 11 members; 55% Quaker; Terry Christensen (Chair)



Report of the Coordinator to Bucks Quarterly Meeting  
November 19, 2023  
Under the Care of Quakertown Monthly Meeting  
Held on Zoom and at Quakertown Meeting

As your Coordinator, I have connections and relationships throughout the yearly meeting. When I attend yearly meeting events, I often hear Friends bemoaning the fact that their memberships are dwindling, and meetings are considering closing their doors. I then speak of the vibrancy of Bucks Quarter - one of the few growing Quarters in PYM, where when one of our meetings is struggling, we come together as a spiritual community to help and support them however we can. This is why we will continue to thrive well into the 21st century and beyond.

## Monthly Meeting Connections

**Meeting Visitation:** This quarter's visitation rotation included Yardley, Newtown (3), Solebury, Buckingham, Makefield, Fallsington (2), Middletown, Quakertown, and Bristol. When asked, I attended their meeting for business, and when invited, I shared a potluck meal. While on vacation in Maine, I shared worship with Vassalboro Friends Meeting.

**Coordinator-Clerk Meetings:** *Meeting with each monthly meeting clerk is one of the identified Coordinator's goals for 2023.* This quarter I met with Yardley Meeting clerk Marna Matthews. She shared some of the joys and challenges of being clerk of a meeting, noting that there is not currently a rising clerk identified. She appreciates all the support she receives from the Quarter.

**Middletown: World Quaker Day:** Friends shared worship with their sister meeting - Settle Friends - in the UK. Worship was followed by sharing queries.

**Newtown Meeting: Honoring COs buried in Newtown Meeting's burial ground:** The children's First Day School lesson focused on honoring those who chose not to serve in the armed forces, by placing a Peace Flag (designed by the children) on the graves of nine conscientious objectors.

**Newtown Meeting Adult First Day:** Along with the other Newtown Meeting Burial Ground liaison, I presented a program entitled "Digging into the Graveyard."

## Bucks Quarter Connections

**BQ Peace Fair Committee:** met monthly until the fair which was held on September 30th. We encouraged attendance from more Bucks Quarter Friends and those that attended received a "Genuine Quaker" pin. To date over 200 have been distributed throughout the Quarter and Yearly Meeting.

**BQ Audit Committee:** the Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, and members of the Audit Committee met over Zoom to conduct the FY 2022-23 audit.

**Bristol Meeting Support Committee:** a committee has been formed which includes the Coordinator, the Quarter Clerk, members from the Quarter, Bristol Meeting, Fallsington Meeting and Redemption Church to help Bristol Meeting during this time of transition. We had our first meeting and said goodbye and thank you to outgoing clerk, Paul Shaffer, and hello to rising clerk, Alisa Myles. The group is committed to seeing Bristol Meeting grow and thrive in the coming years, with the possibility of expanding worship

to more than once a month and having events hosted at the meetinghouse. The committee agreed to meet twice a year.

**BQ Outreach Committee:** the committee met in September, when they approved two outreach grants (Plumstead and Wrightstown). Volunteers were identified to help staff the Quaker tent at the scheduled fall events (Peace Fair, Historic Bristol Day, Historic Fallsington Day and Olde Langhorne Harvest Day). After being without a clerk for over a year, Ed Snyder has agreed to become clerk of the committee.

**BQ Clerk's Meeting:** our quarterly meeting had representatives from 11 meetings. Clerks were given time to share happenings at their meetings. They were given an update on the status of our hybrid meeting in a box trials, and the main agenda item was how can the Quarter and our larger meetings support the smaller meetings in the Quarter.

**Friends Village Mid-Week Meeting for Worship:** Friends Village is experimenting with mid-week meeting for worship. They began in October and are being held bi-weekly on Wednesday afternoons in the sunroom for 30 minutes. The two I attended in October had about 5 participants.

**Hybrid Meeting in a Box:** at our last Quarterly Meeting it was determined that having a virtual component to our Quarterly Meetings would be a goal. As some of our meetings do not currently offer virtual worship, the Coordinator consulted with Richmond Shreve, Newtown Meeting, who was part of our Ad Hoc Technology Group, who assembled the components for a traveling hybrid meeting. These components were tested at Quakertown Meeting, who is hosting today's Quarterly Meeting. The testing was successful, and we will reassess our equipment needs and procedures after today's meeting.

## PYM Connections

**Program Committee:** I continue to serve as clerk of this committee which is under the care of PYM's Quaker Life Council. We meet monthly on Zoom.

**Quarter Staff Gathering:** in anticipation of our Quarter Leadership meeting, a small group of paid Quarter staff gathered to discuss agenda items. As there are very few paid Quarter staff, the meeting was small, but productive.

## Event Attendance

**Arch Street Meetinghouse:** I was a panelist at a workshop entitled "Learning From Friends: Sharing Tips, Strategies and Resources For Quaker Websites. I spoke about the process of upgrading and maintaining our Quarter website.

**Yardley Friends Flea Market:** Many people stopped by the Quaker tent to get information about local Friends. Our "Pick the Quaker" game was a big hit for the second year.

**Quaker Call to Action Call:** There were over 250 participants on the call, with Friends from both PYM and BQ. Parker Palmer spoke on the better angels of our nature: love, truth, justice, and the work of we the people.

**Bucks Quarter Peace Fair:** There were record crowds and a record amount of money was raised. There were many visitors to the Quaker tent, but fewer children participated in tile making. I acted as one of the Fair's photographers/videographers.

**Threshing Session on PYM's Advocacy Policy:** About 75 Friends from around the yearly meeting joined the call to discuss PYM's advocacy policy that was put into effect about a year ago. No decisions

were made, and all questions and concerns were noted by the presiding clerk, Melissa Rycroft, who will refer them to Admin Council for further seasoning.

**Historic Fallsington Day:** the Quarter was scheduled to attend this event, however, given the weather forecast for heavy rain, I decided to pass. Fallsington Friends had a presence in their meetinghouse.

**Historic Bristol Day:** the day began misty and cloudy, but the weather slowly improved until the sun was shining by the end of the event. The crowds increased as the weather improved, and many people engaged in our “Pick the Quaker” activity. The Bristol Meetinghouse was busy with an archeological dig, their new labyrinth, and activities and refreshments provided by their tenant, Redemption Church.

**Olde Langhorne Harvest Day:** Temperatures reached 80 degrees and there were many visitors to our Quaker table. Many thanks to Middletown Meeting for providing volunteers to accompany me throughout the day. The Children’s Tile Painting activity was especially active!

## Social Media & Outreach

**Website:** the calendar is up to date, and I continue to post a new quote on the homepage around the first of the month. There was one Story of Vitality posted each month.

**Facebook:** I continue to post almost daily.

**Times Publishing:** *Publishing a monthly article is one of the identified Coordinator’s goals for 2023.* We continue to publish a Quaker story and ad monthly.

**YouTube:** two new videos were posted this quarter, with the video of Jim and Deb Fine’s presentation “Israel-Palestine After the Atrocities” having 324 views to date - our most popular video.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy Kane  
Coordinator, Bucks Quarterly Meeting

**BUCKS QUARTERLY MEETING**  
**OF**  
**THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS**

Box 4477, Newtown, PA 18940

**AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT**

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**Date:** October 17, 2023

**Subject:** Audit of BQM financial statements and records for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023

**Audit Meetings Attendees:**

Alan Gray, Auditor and Clerk  
Rich Richardson, Auditor  
Jim Michener, Auditor, Recording clerk  
Lisa Parry Becker, BQM Treasurer  
Ed Snyder, outgoing BQM Treasurer<sup>1</sup>  
Wendy Kane, BQM Coordinator

1. The audit committee met to review the financial statements and records of BQM via Zoom meetings on October 8, October 15, and October 17, 2023. The minutes of those meetings are available. The audit was conducted in accordance with the “Audit Procedures for Bucks Quarterly Meeting” by Bill Daly dated 2013-01-09 with the following variances:
  - Instead of all, only four BQM Monthly Meetings’ transaction details were compared to BQM records.
  - Instead of looking at source documents for all expenditures, the auditors chose to examine large expenditures and a sampling of the others.
  - The procedure for Seeking variance between Budget and Actual numbers was skipped because the auditors believe other BQM activities do this work adequately.
  
2. The audit committee’s review consisted principally of inquiries to the BQM Treasurers, examination of BQM’s income and expense statements<sup>2</sup>, cash flow documentation, balance sheets and confirmation of the beginning and closing balances of the BQM’s

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<sup>1</sup> Ed Snyder was the BQM treasurer for July and August of the year covered by this audit.

<sup>2</sup> Including comparison of income and expense transactions between BQM and four selected Monthly Meetings during the audit period.

accounts maintained at the First National Bank and Trust Company of Newtown and at Friends Fiduciary Corporation.

3. The audit committee found the BQM's financial books and records to be well organized and supported by back-up documentation (except as noted in Section 5 below). The financial statements were also found to be free of material misstatements.
4. The audit committee prepared the "work papers" for the audit, as required under Section 1 of the Audit Procedures. They are attached to the minutes of the October 25 audit meeting.
5. As a result of the conduct of this audit, the audit committee makes the following recommendations for future audits:
  - The "work papers" for the audit, described in the Audit Procedures, could be prepared before the first committee meeting.

The audit committee would like to thank Lisa Parry Becker and Ed Snyder for their dedication and diligence both in the office of Treasurer of Bucks Quarterly Meeting and in their responsive assistance during the conduct of this audit. We also want to express our appreciation to Wendy Kane, BQM Coordinator, for her support in organizing Google Drive records and gathering us in Zoom meetings.

Respectfully submitted,

Alan Gray  
Rich Richardson  
Jim Michener  
  
Audit Committee

## BUCKS QUARTERLY MEETING OF FRIENDS 2023 Profit and Lost: 1st Quarter

	JUL 2023 - SEP	Budget	\$ Over Budget	% of Budget
<b>Income</b>				
Interest and dividends FFC	\$ -	<u>\$ 2,020.00</u>	\$ (2,020.00)	0%
<b>Total Interest and dividends</b>	\$ -	\$ 2,020.00	\$ (2,020.00)	0%
<b>Monthly Meeting contributions</b>				
Additional	\$ -	\$ 17,904.00	\$ (17,904.00)	0%
Pledged	<u>\$ 21,029.00</u>	<u>\$ 278,195.00</u>	<u>\$ (257,166.00)</u>	8%
<b>Total Monthly Meeting contributions</b>	\$ 21,029.00	\$ 296,099.00	\$ (275,070.00)	7%
<b>Other contributions</b>				
Quakerphernalia advertising	\$ -	<u>\$ 1,200.00</u>	<u>\$ (1,200.00)</u>	0%
<b>Total Income</b>	<u>\$ 21,029.00</u>	<u>\$ 299,319.00</u>	<u>\$ (278,290.00)</u>	7%
<b>Gross Profit</b>	\$ 21,029.00	\$ 299,319.00	\$ (278,290.00)	7%
<b>Expenses</b>				
<b>Contributions</b>				
Philadelphia Yearly Meeting		\$ 208,724.00	\$ (208,724.00)	0%
<b>Total Contributions</b>		\$ 208,724.00	\$ (208,724.00)	0%
<b>Gifts/Donations</b>				
			\$ -	
Camp Onas	\$ 300.00	\$ 300.00	\$ -	100%
Chandler Hall	\$ 300.00	\$ 300.00	\$ -	100%
Friends Home and Village	<u>\$ 300.00</u>	<u>\$ 300.00</u>	\$ -	100%
<b>Total Gifts/Donations</b>	\$ 900.00	\$ 900.00	\$ -	100%
			\$ -	
<b>Programs, Activities, Outreach</b>				
			\$ -	
Operating	\$ 180.00	\$ 6,500.00	\$ (6,320.00)	3%
<b>Other</b>				
Advertising		\$ 2,200.00	\$ (2,200.00)	0%
Liability Insurance		\$ 1,150.00	\$ (1,150.00)	0%
Outreach Committee Activities		\$ 2,000.00	\$ (2,000.00)	0%
Programs for Peace		\$ 1,700.00	\$ (1,700.00)	0%
Quakerism Classes		\$ 500.00	\$ (500.00)	0%
Young Friends and Other (net)		<u>\$ 350.00</u>	<u>\$ (350.00)</u>	0%
<b>Total Other</b>		<u>\$ 7,900.00</u>	<u>\$ (7,900.00)</u>	0%
<b>Personnel</b>	<u>\$ 16,063.70</u>	<u>\$ 75,295.00</u>	<u>\$ (59,231.30)</u>	21%
<b>Total Programs, Activities, Outreach</b>	<u>\$ 16,243.70</u>	<u>\$ 89,695.00</u>	<u>\$ (73,451.30)</u>	18%
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<u>\$ 17,143.70</u>	<u>\$ 299,319.00</u>	<u>\$ (282,175.30)</u>	6%
<b>Net Operating Income</b>	<u>\$ 3,885.30</u>	\$ -	\$ 3,885.30	
<b>Other Income</b>				
			\$ -	
Unrealized gain/loss (FFC)			\$ -	
<b>Total Other Income</b>			\$ -	
<b>Other Expenses</b>				
			\$ -	
Kirkbride expenses		\$ 7,000.00	\$ (7,000.00)	0%
<b>Total Other Expenses</b>		\$ 7,000.00	\$ (7,000.00)	0%
<b>Net Other Income</b>		\$ (7,000.00)	\$ 7,000.00	0%
<b>Net Income</b>		\$ (7,000.00)	\$ 7,000.00	0%

# BUCKS QUARTERLY MEETING OF FRIENDS

## Balance Sheet

As of September 30, 2023

	TOTAL
<b>ASSETS</b>	
Current Assets	
Bank Accounts	
First National Checking	27,690.71
Petty cash	0.00
<b>Total Bank Accounts</b>	<b>\$27,690.71</b>
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>\$27,690.71</b>
Other Assets	
Friends Fiduciary Corporation	50,301.85
<b>Total Other Assets</b>	<b>\$50,301.85</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$77,992.56</b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND EQUITY</b>	
Liabilities	
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	
Equity	
Kirkbride Estate	9,196.43
Opening Balance Equity	0.00
Unrestricted Net Assets	64,910.83
Net Income	3,885.30
<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>\$77,992.56</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY</b>	<b>\$77,992.56</b>

Bucks Food for Friends  
Annual Report November 19, 2023  
Bucks Quarterly Meeting

Bucks Food For Friends is operated completely by volunteers comprised mostly of Bucks Quarter Quakers. March of 2020 was the last hot meal prepared, packed, and served to our guests “to go”. However, the mission of serving those experiencing food insecurities has adapted to simpler “to go” meals and then delivery is coordinated through the Advocates for the Homeless to the areas they service. We recently increased the number of complete meals provided to 45.

The organization has been so lucky to have a wonderful pool of volunteer resources who historically help with meal preparation, serving, and cleanup. We hope to resume the personal one on one hot meal service for guests, but we haven't found way forward at this point.

BFFF is completely dependent on external donations to support the mission. We are grateful for the continued generosity of monetary donations from individuals and meetings within Bucks Quarter. We are currently in good financial shape, but welcome donations to support the mission. Send donations to Rich Richardson, BFFF Treasurer 1 Atkinson Lane, Newtown, PA 18940.

Submitted by Carol Richardson Volunteer Coordinator  
email: [c.richardson@cbhearthside.com](mailto:c.richardson@cbhearthside.com)



## **Solebury Friends Meeting's Annual report to Bucks Quarterly Meeting 11th month 2023**

This year we mourned the death of important Friends, and had good memorial services for them which helped us to come together as a community.

Our Inreach-Outreach committee has done amazing work this year, including help from attenders as well as members. We finally got internet service installed in the Meetinghouse. We haven't used it much yet, but have already felt the benefit of being able to hold committee meetings at the Meetinghouse with Zoom available to Friends who can't come in person. We anticipate it being a good benefit to offer renters who want to hold weddings or memorial services at Solebury. We will be "renovating" our website soon, and are being more active posting events on different social media sites. We hosted an open house tour of our graveyard and had good attendance from visitors, with music, food, and crafts for fun.

This summer we hosted a group of summer students from the Summer of Freedom camp, run by the Ujima Friends Peace Center, which is located in North Philly. Solebury Friend Amy Manoff explained to the kids how she came to be a fruit farmer and, before taking the kids to pick blueberries, answered all their questions. This is the second year we have hosted them, and we hope to nurture a long time connection with each other.

We have an education grant fund named in honor of a past member Mary Blackmar, to give some financial support to Friends attending Friends Schools. Our connections to Buckingham Friends School, George School, and others are strengthened by our young Friends attendance, and we are grateful for the longstanding ties they help create. In addition to Friends Schools, we hope to do better to nurture young families with the right kind of child care support at our Meeting on First Days.

Our House and Grounds, and Graveyard committees have continued to keep our Meeting in good repair, including a new standing seam metal roof on our carriage sheds, removing old wood siding on our meetinghouse's north gable end to enable repointing of the stone wall behind it, which we will leave exposed once renovated.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Marian Hepburn, Clerk Solebury Friends Meeting



## 2023 ANNUAL REPORT OF PLUMSTEAD MEETING

Plumstead Meeting has had two major focuses in 2023, first: continuing outreach and recovery from attendance losses we sustained in 2020 and 2021, largely covid- related, and second: repairing the exterior of our Meeting House.

### **Outreach**

To enlarge our attendance, we have concentrated on increasing our visibility in the community, and on welcoming old and new attenders. We undertook what we hope will be an annual daffodil planting, aiming to attract visual attention in the spring to our Meeting House. In December 2022 we sent Christmas cards to people we hadn't seen in a while. As we did in 2022, we will again host Christmas Eve Caroling at our Meeting House this year, and we have sent a postcard invitation to our surrounding community. Last spring, 2023, a generous Friend hosted a potluck brunch for all of us at her home. We also began planning for the August Quarterly Meeting at Plumstead.

Having earlier approved an acknowledgment of the native Lenape people on whose land our Meeting House stands, we invited Adam DePaul of the Lenape Nation of Pennsylvania to present a program for the wider Doylestown Community in July, which we advertised through social media, a postcard mailing, and local newspapers. His program attracted a capacity audience- there were people sitting on the windowsills! For the Quarterly Meeting, we also arranged for two speakers, Lois Kuter, clerk of the PYM Quaker Fund for Indigenous Communities, and Arla Patch, from the Coalition of Natives and Allies.

In September, Plumstead Meeting again had a table at the Peace Fair and sold small succulents, gardening books and packets of milkweed seeds for feeding and encouraging monarch butterflies in the garden.

### **Meeting House Repairs**

As she has for several years now, Plumstead Friend Carol Ann Gray oversaw a prodigious number of projects at our Meeting House in 2023. At her invitation in April, Jeff Marshall of Heritage Conservancy, Rick Speranza of Newtown Historical Society and Clint Flack of the Mercer Museum evaluated the structure with the help of a man- lift to the attic. This summer the entire exterior was recoated with historically appropriate lime pebble dash render. All lower window sashes are being repaired, including replacing of broken windowpanes, and restoring sash cords so that the windows can be easily raised. The latrine vents, which had rotted badly at the bottom, were rebuilt. Our stone steps were raised and repositioned for safer and easier access by a helpful Meeting Attender who has the skills and the equipment to do it. A new iron handrail will be installed by the front door by the end of November.

Plans are already made for 2024 to replace our porch roof and to install a French drain around the Meeting House to help prevent any future water damage. Our Meeting is also discussing the possibility of establishing a natural, unmowed area on part of our property. We hope to investigate this more with the help of Journeywork, a volunteer organization that encourages use of natives to establish biodiversity.

### **Support of Charitable Organizations**

As we have done for many years, Plumstead Friends continued weekly collection of food for Doylestown Food Pantry in 2023, and we will have a Mitten Tree collection of warm winter clothing to go to Mercer Street Friends. We also participated in the Quarter's collection of young people's clothing for them this spring.

### **Membership**

Sadly, long-time member Kenneth E. Ahl passed away on April 29 this year.

**11/19/23**

Another great year at Newtown Friends Meeting! As reported last year, we approved construction of additional parking on the north side of the Meeting House. Additional parking proposed on the west side of the Meeting House was not approved, but will be re-evaluated in the future after the Meeting has had experience with the north lot expansion.

That construction has basically been completed and has provided 20 parking spaces for our property. The construction went well and all are pleased with the outcome.

To fund this project, we took an interest-free loan of \$250,000 from our General Fund endowment to pay for planning, approvals and construction. An Ad Hoc Committee was organized and they conducted a fund-raising campaign for "Land Use Planning and Improvement" which began in early May. Our goal is repayment of the \$250K loan and provision for additional landscape design and improvements, with an emphasis on support by current members and attenders who will benefit most from this project. The Land Use fundraising effort thus far has received \$233,000 in gifts and pledges, for which we are grateful. The fundraising goal is \$400,000.

**Building and Grounds**

The committee also continued the process of developing the land use plan for the Meeting property, which had started with the placemaking exercise in 2020. The objective is to create a plan that encompasses the longer-term use of the property, and allows phased implementation. Building and Grounds sent an RFP to six landscape architecture firms, two of which responded. The Building & Grounds committee then reviewed these proposals and chose Studio Bryan Hanes.

Byian Hanes presented 2 plans to the Meeting during an Adult First Day program. More discernment will follow.

**Ad Hoc AV committee**

The ad hoc Audio Visual (A/V) Committee was charged with developing a recommendation for improving the audio and video capabilities within the main meeting room and community room within the Meeting House. The committee's primary objectives were:

To identify a solution that would support hybrid meetings in both rooms

- To minimize distractions caused by the equipment
- To minimize the burden of operating the equipment

Generous members of the Meeting have offered to provide special funding to cover the cost of this project. Therefore we did not need to draw from the Meeting's endowment or operating budget.

It is noted that the BQM \$500 grant was applied to this project.

At this time, we are finalizing the installation of the following in our main Meeting Room:

1. Two 24" x 24" ceiling mounted panels containing microphone arrays which will provide coverage for the entire room
2. Four 24" x 24" ceiling mounted speakers.
3. A single pan-tilt-zoom high definition camera that has the ability to capture an image of the entire room as well as focus on specific locations within the room.
4. A single 85" flat panel 4K display that will offer a high-contrast video display which will be easier to see than a projected image.

A similar set-up will be installed in our Community Room.

### **Our Adult Religious Education**

During the 2022-23 school year, the Adult Religious Education (ARE) presented 24 programs. These featured spiritual journeys given by several in the Newtown Meeting community, NFM committee programs, Quaker organizations, climate crisis and social justice, Quaker history and 2 programs given by young adults.

### **Children's Religious Education**

#### **Simple Supper**

Our Simple Supper dinner held 11/10/23 raised (so far) \$1858 for Penndel Food Pantry.

#### **Lasagna Dinner - 4/21/23**

After a discernment exercise in CRE classes, the decision was made to give the proceeds of the Lasagna Dinner to Right Sharing of World Resources. Right Sharing of World Resources is a Quaker non-profit that is active in Kenya, Sierra Leone, India and Guatemala, supporting women-run businesses.

First we'd like to thank Financial Oversight for agreeing to our request for \$6500 to fund a grant from Right Sharing of World Resources to a women's microlending group. \$4108 was raised at the Lasagna dinner, and the balance of \$2392 came from the Agency contributions line in the Operating Budget.

RSWR sent the Meeting a list of 6 possible microlending groups to choose from. A survey was sent to the Meeting community asking for their feedback on which group they wanted to support. A called meeting for discernment was held on Sunday 10/26. The results of the survey and discussion led us to choose Jeyam Rural Women, Children and the Handicapped Development Society in Tamil Nadu, India as two of our members travel in that area.

### **Care & Counsel**

We are happy to acknowledge 2 wonderful events in our Meeting. First the marriage of Spencer Richardson and Margeaux Hunt under the care of the meeting.

Lyra Manchanda was welcomed to the community, born April 12 to Sameer and Tucker Manchanda.

Membership figures for 2023:

	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>
Total Members	340	344
Full Members	332	338
Adult	304	316
Minor	28	22
Associate	8	6

### **Inreach/Outreach**

450 hand-addressed picture postcards to new residents of Newtown encouraging them to come visit one Sunday morning. We are near completion of updating a new picture postcard to send to new residents.

This same committee produced a reusable shopping bag with a Newtown Quaker Meeting logo for use in an effort to reduce single-use plastic bags.

Financial Oversight presented a balanced budget targeting \$117,565 in annual fund contributions, an increase of 4.9% over the past two years, which was adjusted to match expected operating expenses. The operating budget does not include any contribution from endowment income. As was the case last year, operating expenditures include contributions totaling \$45,000 to Bucks Quarterly Meeting and Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, a contribution of \$4,000 to Newtown Friends School, contributions of \$500 each to local police, fire and ambulance services, and \$3,000 in grants to not-for-profit agencies.

Newtown Friends School, which is under the care of the Meeting, is off to a great start this year. The school began the year at the highest enrollment they have experienced in many years, including two separate pre-kindergarten classrooms.

For the 2022-2023 school year, Newtown Friends School continued its trend of increasing enrollment, with a total of 324 students from pre-k through eighth grade. In fact, due to demand for early childhood programming, for the first time in the school's history, NFS opened a second Pre-K classroom. Across the school, 75 new students enrolled.

The school has embarked on a strategic plan process that has taken all of the current school year. We are working with the planning firm of Leadership and Design.

Due to demands from her full time job the current Clerk, Katherine Borish, made the difficult decision to step down from the Clerkship after one year. Nominating had the task of filling the Assistant Clerkship earlier than anticipated. We are pleased to report that the task was amply completed and the Meeting

approved Barbara Simmons as the new Assistant Clerk, beginning January 2024. Katherine will continue as Assistant Clerk until the end of 2023.

Respectfully submitted,

Katherine Borish/Janet Braker, Clerk of Newtown Monthly Meeting

Peace Fair Committee  
Report to Bucks Quarterly Meeting of Friends  
19<sup>th</sup> Day 11<sup>th</sup> Month 2023

The 23rd Bucks Quarter Peace Fair, held at Buckingham on Saturday, September 30, was again a great day for all who attended, exhibited, and volunteered. It was an exceptionally rainy September, and if we had held the fair earlier in the month as is our usual practice it most certainly would have been rained out! (Moving the Fair indoors by using Buckingham Friends School buildings would not have been possible due to their construction project.) Our mission statement continues to be to “promote harmony in the home, community, environment, and the world.”

The Peace Fair Committee had active participants from eight Monthly Meetings (and would like to have more). We were able to begin our planning in March, with all of our committee meetings held via Zoom. Peter Ray continued as our paid coordinator. Over 65 non-profit and craft exhibitors reserved tables. The Bucks Quarter table had a craft project for children and gave “Genuine Quaker” buttons to all Friends who stopped by to chat—over 70 did!

Like last year, the Fair was again the beneficiary of outstanding volunteer support by the Friends of Bucks Quarter. Yardley Meeting passed on their flea market books to us, Quakertown Friends made the long trek to help us set up, and Southampton helped tidy up afterwards. Newtown ran the café; Solebury, under the leadership of John Mathieu, cooked our food; and Middletown made and sold our chili. Buckingham Friends School students again participated fully as “ambassadors” at Fair. Philadelphia Yearly Meeting provided a staff member and support for a gathering of Young Friends. They came for the day of the fair only (not overnight) and were few in number, but very helpful. Nevertheless, we still could have used even more volunteers. We continued to rely on SignUp Genius, which can be confusing. It would be ideal if a monthly meeting or an individual or group could step up to make proper recycling and greater sustainability a reality at next year’s Fair. Another specific area where we need help is in using social media more effectively.

The Fair was busy with visitors all day long, with about 1200 attendees recorded at the entrance. A donation of \$2 per person was suggested at the door. Setup and cleanup went very smoothly, but all of the recent rain made parking in the Buckingham graveyard a problem. Our musical attractions were varied and entertaining, including Ecoman (Richard McLoughlin) bluegrass band Tookany Creek, and an outstanding performance by local Andean and Latin American folk music group Eco del Sur.

In past years many people, including Quakers, asked, “Where is all the money going?” This year we had an answer, as we partnered with the Bucks County Interfaith Coalition for Refugee Resettlement (<https://www.bcicrr.org>) to help promote the Fair. We gave them a \$500 donation. However, higher costs due to inflation left the Fair with a deficit (including the donation) of about \$800. Nevertheless, the Fair is historically on a sound financial footing without continued support from the Quarter and Buckingham Meeting.

Looking forward, we already have plans for new features at next year’s Fair. We cannot yet confirm the date for the 2024 Fair, as we need to wait for Peddler’s Village to set the date for their Scarecrow Festival (they allow us to use their parking area as a courtesy). In the



meantime, please visit us at [www.peacefair.org](http://www.peacefair.org), “Like” us at [www.facebook.com/peacefair](http://www.facebook.com/peacefair) and follow “peacefair” on Instagram.

Respectfully submitted,  
Tim Cunningham, committee clerk  
(Buckingham Meeting)