

Wading Deeper into the Ocean of Light

Handbook

**New Haven Monthly Meeting
Religious Society of Friends
(Quakers)**

CONTENTS

Welcome	page 3
Handy Information	page 4
Quaker Faith: What Do Friends Believe?	page 6
Historic Roots: Where Quakers Come From	page 6
Friends' Values and Beliefs	page 6
Quaker Testimonies	page 6
Quaker Practice: Structure of the Religious Society of Friends	page 8
Monthly, Quarterly, and Yearly Meetings	page 8
Overview of New Haven Monthly Meeting	page 10
History of the New Haven Meeting	page 10
Membership	page 10
Requesting membership	page 10
Committees and their Roles	page 11
Officers and their Roles	page 13
Other Functions	page 14
Clearness Committees	page 14
Seeker Sessions	page 14
First Day School for Children	page 14
Adult Study	page 15
Financial support for Quaker activities	page 15
Pastoral Care Guidelines	page 15
The Wider Quaker World	page 19
Quaker Organizations in North America	page 19
Friends Organizations Worldwide	page 20
How Can You Learn More about Quakerism?	page 21
How Can You Get More Involved?	page 23
Glossary of Useful Quaker Words and Phrases	page 25

*Published by the Committee on Ministry and Counsel, New Haven Friends Meeting
(February 2022 Revision)*

*Testimonies from "Meeting the Spirit" an introduction to Quaker beliefs and practices by FWCC
Europe and Middle East Section. Quaker Splits and Organizations from FGC pamphlet*

Please send corrections and suggestions to the Ministry and Counsel Committee.

WELCOME ALL to the New Haven, CT Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

Worship and Ministry

At our Meeting for Worship, Friends gather in silent prayer, to listen, to meditate, and to wait while seeking divine guidance and understanding. We Friends have no paid clergy, no ritual, dogma, neither icons nor liturgy; we all share the responsibility for ministry of the Meeting. We may participate in the Divine Presence silently or we may feel moved to speak “ministry” or “testimony” which is expected to be inspired by God. We strive to help and strengthen one another in our spiritual development and in our search for a better understanding of God’s will.

We of New Haven Friends Meeting believe there is “that of God” in every person and welcome all seekers of God who can accept the ways of Friends. We continually seek God and Truth with humility and, sometimes, even doubt. Friends find God’s message in the teachings of many religions, and through different sources, including writings and verbal communications, as well as by direct personal experience. Our Meeting welcomes people of every race, ethnicity, religious background, ability, sexual orientation and gender.

We find great joy in the diversity of beliefs of members and attenders of New Haven Friends Meeting. For some, Jesus is a living presence in their daily lives; for others, the life and teachings of Jesus are important as examples with a range of interpretations. Differences among our members in theological traditions and beliefs are respected and valued. We are grateful for the three centuries-old Religious Society of Friends. We encourage you to discover the beauty and the challenge in the tradition we view as a door to be opened, a living community to which we welcome you.

You are invited...

Perhaps the approach of Friends may be helpful and meaningful to you. We welcome you to search with us. Please join us for Meeting for Worship in our Meetinghouse on Sundays for our main service at 10:30 am. Our Meetings for Worship last about one hour.

Children of all ages are also welcome at Meeting for Worship and in our First Day School. Children often gather with adults in the meeting room for the first fifteen minutes of Meeting for Worship, and then go downstairs for First Day School. The children re-join meeting at the close of worship as we go around and say our names. Childcare is available from 10:30 to 11:30 am for babies and toddlers. The Meeting is welcoming of families with young children who are still learning to come and go quietly from Meeting for Worship. Many babies have engaged in vocal ministry in the quiet comfort of a settled meeting.

Once a month we have a Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business. We follow Friends’ tradition of conducting business in a prayerful manner. After people have shared their views on an issue in a spirit of love and patience, the clerk of the meeting determines the “sense of the meeting” for our business decisions, rather than asking for a vote. All are invited and encouraged to attend.

HANDY INFORMATION

(The electronic version of this document is on our website under Resources. To go to websites (in blue) in the online text, scroll over name and “Ctrl + Left Click on ‘mouse’ to follow link).

Website (<https://www.quakercloud.org/cloud/new-haven-friends-meeting>)

Our full name: New Haven Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

Often shortened to: New Haven Friends Meeting or New Haven Quaker Meeting

Other: Our building is called our Meetinghouse. Our congregation is called our Meeting. We are also often referred to collectively and individually simply as “Friends,” as are our organizations, e.g., “Friends School,” “Friends Meeting.”

Meeting for Worship

Each Sunday, our main Meeting for Worship is from 10:30-11:30 am, conducted simultaneously in person at our meetinghouse and on Zoom. To access the Zoom link, email nhquakers@gmail.com and ask to be put on the email list if you are not already on it. Pandemic protocols of mask-wearing and distancing will be in place until it is safe to discontinue them.

Fellowship

Due to the pandemic, our normal after-meeting gathering downstairs in the meetinghouse for food and fellowship is discontinued. Once it is safe, it will be resumed.

First Day School and Childcare

Normally held September through mid-June downstairs during our main Meeting for Worship time: 10:30 – 11:30. For notices about resumption when it is safe, see the weekly updates.

Stitching Group

Normally Mondays, 7:00 - 9:00 pm at the Meetinghouse, suspended during the pandemic. Sewing, knitting, or crafts to work on over conversation and perhaps a mug of tea.

Friends Center for Children, Inc. a daycare and pre-school on the grounds of the Meetinghouse, was founded by members of our Meeting and is a separate, non-profit organization. See friendscenterforchildren.org for complete information.

Meetinghouse address: 225 East Grand Avenue, New Haven, CT 06513

Phone number to leave messages for the caretaker, Belinda Allen: 203.468.2398

Phone number in Meetinghouse (rarely used): 203.468.7364

The Meeting’s email address for general correspondence: The email address 'nhquakers@gmail.com' is actively monitored by members of the Communications Committee. Requests are either handled by them, or forwarded to the appropriate committee.

Facebook page: [New Haven Friends Meeting](#)

Meeting email list: to receive weekly announcements, email your request to: nhquakers@gmail.com or fill out a card in the foyer, and place it in the wooden box in the front corner of the Meeting Room by the door.

Meeting calendar: is on the public section of our website at <https://www.quakercloud.org/cloud/new-haven-friends-meeting> lower right column. The calendar shows internal and external events taking place at the meetinghouse. Requests to schedule internal events on a Saturday or Sunday should be sent to the clerking committee at NHFclerks@gmail.com. For other events at open times during the week, contact Belinda Allen, scheduler, at 203-468-2398.

To register to get access to materials on the **password-protected portion of our website**, see: <https://www.quakercloud.org/node/3746/join>

Meeting directory: on website, available to registered members and attenders. Updated yearly. To be listed in the directory, send your request to nhquakers@gmail.com

To make a donation to the Meeting: you may put cash or a check in the wooden box in the front corner of meeting room. Or send a check addressed to Treasurer, New Haven Friends Meeting, 225 East Grand Avenue, New Haven, CT 06513. Or donate online at our website: <https://www.quakercloud.org/cloud/new-haven-friends-meeting>. Or arrange with the Treasurer to have an automatic deduction made from your bank account. The Meeting is entirely supported by voluntary donations. (We will never pass a collection plate and contributions of any size are gratefully received). There is no paid staff, and all work of the Meeting is done by its members and attenders.

Use of the Meetinghouse by outside groups (suspended during the pandemic): once it is safe to resume outside meetings, the request form is on the website at <https://www.fgcquaker.org/cloud/new-haven-friends-meeting/resources/form-requesting-use-meetinghouse>. Outside groups are invited to request use of the meetinghouse. Review our online calendar for open dates. Then call Belinda Allen at 203.468.239, the Meeting scheduler, well in advance of any proposed event. A voluntary contribution to cover Meeting's costs for the event is appreciated.

To request reimbursement for Meeting expense: the form is on the website under Resources. <https://www.quakercloud.org/cloud/new-haven-friends-meeting/resources/form-reimbursement-meeting-purchases> Fill out and submit to our Treasurer.

Monthly Calendar

Every Sunday: Our main Meeting for Worship is held from 10:30 – 11:30 a.m., on Zoom and at the meetinghouse under pandemic protocols.

Third Sunday: Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business, 10:30-11:30am. This is the occasion for attending to the business and temporal affairs of the Meeting. All are invited to attend and participate, either on Zoom or in person under pandemic protocols.

QUAKER FAITH: WHAT DO FRIENDS BELIEVE?

Historic Roots: Where Quakers Come From

We, who are called Seekers of the Truth, Quakers, and Friends, are members of the Religious Society of Friends. The Quaker movement originated in mid-seventeenth century England. With the advent of printing, the Bible was becoming widely known, and it appeared to many who read it that the early Christian church depended very little on ecclesiastical structure, elaborate ritual and formal creeds. Indeed, it depended greatly on experiencing the Spirit in the midst of a worshipping group and on prophetic utterances inspired by the Spirit. The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) was one of the most radical, new Christian sects emerging during the Reformation. Various new religious groups increasingly sought to separate themselves from the established church and from each other by shedding vestiges of religious authority, ritual, creeds, icons and symbols of the traditional Christian church. It has been said that the Friends have “taken out everything except dependence on the Divine Spirit for guidance and power.” Over the years, Quakers, by their attitude and behavior, have influenced history and society out of proportion to their numbers. Some have suffered for their convictions and deeds based upon their spirituality.

Friends Beliefs and Values

Friends believe God is present in every person. It is our responsibility to seek out and nurture “that of God” - often called “the Inner Light” or “Christ within” - both in ourselves and in others. While seeking the Inner Light, at any time or place, we can experience direct, personal access to God without material or human intermediaries.

Among Quakers, our most treasured values are truthfulness, simplicity, a simple lifestyle, non-violence and a reverence for all life. Quakerism is a dual commitment to spiritual awareness and social action as a form of ministry. God still speaks to us and we must respond. We work towards peace, justice and reconciliation because we believe they are the way to uphold our spiritual truths. We are led to implement our concern for equal rights for all. We have a ministry of service to humankind and nature. Carrying out our beliefs through action in our daily lives is a spiritual process through which we find commitment and strength.

Quaker Testimonies

Friends use the word ‘testimony’ to describe a witness to the living Truth within the human heart as it is acted out in everyday life. It is not a form of words, but a mode of life based on the realization that there is “that of God in everyone,” that all human beings are equal, and that all life is interconnected. It is affirmative but may lead to action that runs counter to certain practices currently accepted in society at large. Testimonies reflect the communal beliefs of the Religious Society of Friends, and individual Friends may interpret them differently according to their own light. They are not ‘optional extras’ but fruits that grow from the tree of faith. Basic Quaker testimonies are: truth, equality, peace, simplicity and community. They are not an end unto themselves, but rather a pathway to a closer relationship to God.

Truth

Truth is a complex concept. Sometimes the word is used for God, sometimes for the conviction that arises from worship, sometimes for the way of life. It was the obedience to truth as they understood it that led Friends to act in ways which others thought odd and even provocative. For early Friends, witnessing to Truth involved the keeping up of public meetings for worship, whatever the penalties involved. It also involved preaching, for which many Friends were imprisoned. The concern for truthfulness led Friends right from the first day to refuse to take oaths. An oath, according to them, was a sign that there were two different levels of truthfulness and they believed that you should tell the truth all the time. Margaret Fell was imprisoned and lost all her property for her refusal to take an oath of loyalty to the English king.

Equality

If God is directly accessible to all persons, regardless of age, gender, race, nationality, sexual orientation, disability, economic, social or educational position - if every person is held equal in God's love and has equal potential to be a channel for the revelation of God's Truth - then all persons are to be equally valued. There is that Seed that Light - there is "that of God" in every person. For Friends this insight has meant, from the beginning, equality of the sexes and of races. In England and the English colonies, this had to mean the end of privilege based on wealth or class. In Japan and Kenya, where the existing cultures made women little more than 'domestic property', it resulted in the establishment of Quaker schools for girls. It also formed the basis for opposition to slavery and the death penalty. Although Quakers historically have been far from perfect in their realization of the equality testimony, it has remained one of their deepest aspirations.

Peace

The peace testimony is based on the same understanding of the nature of God and of human beings. How can one kill another child of God, a potential channel of Truth, no matter how misguided he or she may seem at the moment? This testimony has led Friends to oppose all wars and preparation for wars. At the time of the American Revolution, many Friends were 'disowned' by their meetings for participating in military actions. Later, Friends, faced with military conscription, worked to establish the right of conscientious objection. Some Friends today work to end the conscription of our taxes to pay for war and also do counter-recruitment work in order to make young people aware of the full implications of joining the military.

The peace testimony has meant efforts to ease suffering of victims of war on all sides. It means efforts to be or to seek a reconciling force between peoples and nations in conflict. It means a constant search for nonviolent means of conflict resolution through institutions of law, such as international treaties and structures like the European Union or the United Nations. It means a continuing search for peace and social justice through personal and group nonviolent techniques for mediation and social change. The Friends Committee on National Legislation in Washington (FCNL), and the Quaker United Nations Offices (QUNOs) in Geneva and New York, for example, promote Quaker views at the heart of centers of power, where political, economic and military decisions with worldwide effect are made ("speaking truth to power"). The American Friends Service Committee tries "what love can do" in places of conflict and strife at home and abroad, ministering to both sides of a conflict.

Simplicity

There is certainty among Friends that the world offers many distractions from the Truth -- for example, the pursuit of wealth or power or pleasure, extravagance in language, fashion or behavior, and too great an emphasis on business, even for good causes. Truth is usually discovered in quiet, undistracted waiting for its leadings in the human heart, in the humble simplicity of spirit, which acknowledges that ultimately, God is in charge of our world, not we ourselves.

The testimony of simplicity reminds us that Friends have found value in focusing our attention on what is essential and eternal, without distraction by the transitory or the trivial. Plain and honest speech is an expression of simplicity. Respect for God's creation and, therefore, concern for the environment and the right use of the world's resources is another obvious expression of this testimony. A growth economy based on extravagance, wastefulness and artificially stimulated wants is seen to be a fundamental violation of the testimony of simplicity.

Community

As equally beloved children of God, all human beings are siblings, one human family, no matter how great our differences of experience, of culture, of age, of understanding. Friends have found that the Light may illuminate a gathered group as well as an individual heart and bind the group together in a community of faith, conscience and experience. Friends see it as their task to build a broader community throughout our world, by seeing and affirming in each other the divine potential, the Seed, the Christ, the Light within. We must learn to deal with one another by affirming and nurturing the best we find in each other. In such a community, Friends believe, human beings witness to the sovereignty, compassion and love of the God of their experience.

“Be patterns, be examples in all countries, places, islands, nations, wherever you come; then your carriage and life may preach among all sorts of people, and to them. Then you will come to walk cheerfully over the world, answering that of God in every one.”

George Fox, Journal, 1656

QUAKER PRACTICE: STRUCTURE OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

Monthly, Quarterly and Yearly Meetings

It was the genius of George Fox and early Friends to develop the structure of monthly, quarterly and yearly meetings, which has provided cohesion at local and regional levels for over 300 years. A *monthly meeting* is one that usually worships together weekly and holds a meeting for business once a month. Several monthly meetings make up a *quarterly* (small regional) meeting. Two or more quarterly meetings in turn make up a *yearly* meeting, which gathers annually. Although there also used to be five-year meetings consisting of a number of yearly meetings, yearly meeting is now the highest level at which Friends come together for decision-making and official business.

New Haven Monthly Meeting is one of nine monthly meetings and three worship groups constituting the Connecticut Valley Quarterly Meeting. Our Quarter includes monthly meetings located in western Massachusetts and most of Connecticut (some southwestern Connecticut meetings are associated with New York Yearly Meeting.). The Connecticut Valley Quarterly Meeting gathers First Sundays in February and May, sometimes with optional activities the preceding Saturday evening, and the first weekend in October from Friday until Sunday afternoon at **Woolman Hill**, a Quaker retreat center in western Massachusetts. The location of the February and May quarterly meetings rotates among the meetings in the quarter, as does responsibility for hosting these meetings. New Haven hosts Quarterly Meeting about every other year, and has some responsibility for the fall gathering at Woolman Hill every year.

There are eight quarterly meetings (consisting of 68 monthly meetings) which form New England Yearly Meeting. Beginning on the first Saturday in August Yearly Meeting gathers for six days of worship, business, fellowship, workshops and communal life, often called “Sessions” by Friends. It is held on a college campus, sometimes with options for camping. It is a wonderful opportunity to meet Friends from our region of the country. Many young Friends especially enjoy attending and meeting other Quaker youth; there is always an outstanding children’s program.

The Yearly Meeting also organizes weekend retreats for children. Five to six overnight retreats are organized throughout the year for each age group: an elementary group (1st grade to 5th grade) a middle school group (6th to 8th grades) and a high school group (9th to 12th grade). The children learn how to live together in community guided by a seasoned Quaker staff. Chores are assigned, conflicts are resolved peacefully, and all ages are treated equally. Many children find these retreats transformative and unlike any experiences they have in school or in the outside world. There are also gatherings for “Young Adult Friends” ages 18 – 35’ish.

The Yearly Meeting (www.neym.org) maintains a small paid staff. The Yearly Meeting office is in Worcester, Massachusetts. The staff assists the various Yearly Meeting committees with their work, everything from Peace and Social Concerns to Archives, Aging, and Ministry and Counsel. In order to carry out its business, the Yearly Meeting requests that each meeting provide financial support. Individuals are also welcome to contribute financially, and invited to serve on Yearly Meeting committees. Yearly Meeting gathers once a year during Sessions, the week that begins with the first Saturday of August, to conduct Yearly Meeting business.

There are numerous other yearly meetings around the country and globe, each composed of quarterly and monthly meetings. These monthly and yearly meetings come in many different varieties or “flavors” of Quakerism, ranging from very liberal to very conservative, from universalist to Christ-centered, to fundamentalist to evangelical. Our library has fascinating information on how these various groups evolved from 17th century Quakerism in England. Some of the ideological splits that occurred in the 1700s and 1800s have healed in our century. Two of the common threads that tie all Quakers together, regardless of theology, are that all are derived from the concepts formulated by George Fox and all have Meetings for Business where decisions are made by gathering a “sense of the meeting” “in the Light” rather than by majority vote.

Overview of New Haven Friends Meeting

History of New Haven Friends Meeting (otherwise known as New Haven Monthly Meeting)

Our Monthly Meeting was founded in 1930 and worshipped in Connecticut Hall on the Yale campus for most of our first 60 years. We built our Meetinghouse and occupied it in 1995.

Membership in New Haven Friends Meeting and the Religious Society of Friends

You are considered an integral part of New Haven Friends Meeting simply by attending Meetings for Worship regularly and being involved in some of the work of the Meeting. Membership in New Haven Friends Meeting is a more formal commitment, and one which is approved by our Meeting for Business. When you become a member of New Haven Friends Meeting, you also become (automatically) a member of our Quarterly Meeting, New England Yearly Meeting, and the Religious Society of Friends.

Though some people may attend Meeting for years without requesting formal membership, others request it sooner, sometimes after a year or two. The Meeting encourages attenders to consider membership when they feel ready. While we encourage all who are active participants in the Meeting to become members, we do not generally distinguish between those who are formal members and those who are not. Only the Clerk of the Meeting (or those on the Clerking Committee who clerk Meeting for Business) and members of Ministry and Counsel Committee must be members of the Meeting. Anyone interested in membership in the Religious Society of Friends is encouraged to explore Quakerism by attending Meeting for Worship, Meeting for Business, and other Meeting functions; by reading *Faith and Practice* of New England Yearly Meeting of Friends, materials from our library and other sources; and by joining a Meeting committee, and interacting with Friends here in New Haven and in the wider Quaker community.

Requesting Membership

When you feel sufficiently familiar with Quaker faith and practice and feel that membership would enhance your spiritual growth, you may request membership. Please see information about membership in *Faith and Practice* of New England Yearly Meeting on [page-161](#). To request membership in the Religious Society of Friends, write a letter to the Meeting, which should be given to the clerk or clerking committee. The clerk will share it with the Ministry and Counsel Committee. In response to a written request for membership, Ministry and Counsel will appoint a clearness committee for membership. In an informal and relaxed setting, this committee will explore with the individual his/her reasons for wishing to join as well as their understanding of Quaker faith and practice, willingness to take on responsibility in the Meeting, and prospects for gaining spiritually from their association with the Religious Society of Friends. After meeting for clearness with the candidate, Ministry and Counsel may decide upon recommending membership at that time, or they may suggest that the individual take more time to familiarize themselves with the various facets of Quakerism or our Meeting in particular. When the clearness committee recommends acceptance of membership, the next scheduled Business Meeting will consider the recommendation. After approval by Business Meeting, the new member is recorded in the Business minutes and with the Meeting's Recorder.

Children may be accepted into junior membership in the Religious Society of Friends by request of their parent(s). The request is submitted in the form of a letter to Ministry and Counsel. As

spiritual maturity develops in parallel with an understanding of Quaker principles, junior members are expected, when the time seems right, to express in writing to Ministry and Counsel their wish to affirm and continue their membership. At this time, a clearness committee will meet with the junior member, and report to Business Meeting. Junior membership ends at age 25 if no decision to become a member of meeting has been made by the junior member.

Friends who have been members of the Religious Society of Friends through other monthly meetings in the United States or abroad may request transfer of their membership to New Haven Friends Meeting. Once you are sufficiently familiar with New Haven Friends Meeting to feel interested and committed to it, you can initiate the transfer by writing to the clerk of your previous monthly meeting.

Committees and Their Roles

There is no paid staff in our New Haven Meeting and all of the work of the Meeting is done by its attenders and members in committees. Only the Ministry and Counsel committee requires membership in the Meeting. All other committees are open to all members and attenders. Most people in our Meeting serve on committees, as officers, or as representatives to other Quaker organizations. If you are interested in serving, the clerk of the Nominating Committee is the person to speak to. Check the website for meeting dates.

Committees make many decisions on behalf of the Meeting. With important decisions that involve the life of the whole Meeting or where expenditures of over \$500 are considered, the committee makes a recommendation to Business Meeting which then makes a final decision.

Communications Committee: works with Meeting for Business and committees to post information on our website and on social media, develops policies for posting, and considers how information flows within our Meeting and how the Meeting projects itself to the outside world.

Committee on Ministry and Counsel: The function of the committee is to oversee and nurture the religious life of the meeting, to foster the spiritual growth of the entire membership, and to enhance the community life of the meeting. The committee clerks Meeting for Worship, and is especially attentive to the quality of worship. In addition, it is responsible for organizing retreats, Seeker Sessions, other community building events, providing pastoral care and outreach, considering requests for membership and marriage, and assisting with memorial meetings for deceased Friends. Ministry and Counsel is also responsible for the State of Society Report that is shared with New England Yearly Meeting and CT Valley Quarterly Meeting. Ministry and Counsel is composed of six members of the Meeting. The members serve for three years on a rotational basis. The Clerk (or members of the clerking committee) is an ex-officio member of the committee. Ministry and Counsel is the only committee that requires membership in the meeting. See Faith and Practice for further guidance, [page-166](#). By past practice, the members of this committee are also automatically part of the CT Valley Quarterly Meeting Ministry and Counsel.

Fellowship Committee: This committee is responsible for finding ways to improve fellowship within the Meeting. This committee arranges after-Meeting refreshments, regularly scheduled

potlucks, and other celebrations and social occasions.

Finance Committee: The goal of the Finance Committee is to enable the Meeting to discuss and decide financial issues clearly, knowledgeably, with care and as comfortably as possible. The committee, while holding a sense of the meeting, oversees the finances of meeting, prepares a budget for meeting annually, and ensures that there is an annual audit. The committee is made up of members and attenders.

First Day School Committee: This committee shares responsibility for the education of our children about Quakerism on behalf of the Meeting, and for supporting parents in their role as the primary educators of their children about the beliefs of Friends. Teachers in our Meeting recognize the gifts of the children they come to know in our classes, and may encourage and support their leadings as they make the transition to adulthood. Our committee regards the activities offered by New England Yearly Meeting during Yearly Meeting Sessions as important for the children, teenagers and young adults of the Meeting. We are happy to orient parents and youth to these programs. Some adults in our Meeting have served as teachers and staff for the Yearly Meeting programs. Families that need help in order for their children to participate can ask for it.

FDS Committee responsibilities include oversight of the FDS curriculum, library, and calendar, of the classroom environments, the play yard, and of the special events for FDS children and young adults. We employ a very experienced professional to provide infant and toddler care who has been with us for many years. We have a child care space that is just for babies and toddlers. The committee identifies FDS teachers, supporting their work with curriculum guidance, supply management, substitute teaching, reimbursement approval, child registration, and parent outreach during the school year. During the summer when First Day School is in recess, the Committee helps coordinate childcare as needed, posting a sign-up for parents to indicate their care needs and for volunteers to provide it. The Meeting is vigilant about the safety of the children under our care. We also work with parents and teachers to meet the needs of children with special needs, so that they are able to participate and benefit from what we have to offer, and so that they know they are loved and valued members of our community.

Library Committee: The Library Committee makes purchases of books, films, tapes, pamphlets and magazine subscriptions, catalogues the reading material in its collection, keeps the records of items checked out, and reminds borrowers to return items held longer than one month. The Library's holdings consist of approximately 400 items. The library is always expanding and improving.

Nominating Committee: Six members or attenders of meeting serve on this committee, which is responsible for finding persons to serve as officers, representatives and committee members for Meeting. Members of the committee are appointed by Business Meeting and are chosen with regard to their discernment, seasoned judgment, and general knowledge of the members and attenders of meeting. Two new appointments are made in June of each year for a three-year term.

Peace and Social Outreach Committee: Peace and social justice issues are threshed here before coming to Business Meeting. New Haven Meeting gives ten percent of its yearly budget to

charitable causes. The social outreach committee is the place to go with a *leading* you wish the meeting to support.

Property Committee: The committee has stewardship of the physical needs of the building and grounds, monitors the use of the building, organizes spring and fall workdays, and is the link to the caretaker.

Representatives to other Quaker bodies: Our Meeting also sends representatives to Quarterly Meeting, to the Quaker retreat center Woolman Hill, and to various committees of New England Yearly Meeting. We always send a representative to Yearly Sessions.

Ad Hoc Quaker Study Group. Formed to bring materials to the meeting about Quaker history, faith and practice, and their relevance to current day issues, sessions usually offered once a month. The study group is the planning group and is open to anyone, as are all the sessions, which are conducted on Zoom.

Meeting Officers and Their Roles

(See NEYM Faith and Practice, [page 149](#))

The Clerk or Clerking Committee of Meeting: The Clerk or Clerking Committee sees that business is properly presented to the Meeting for consideration by Meeting for Business, conducts all Meetings for Business in a worshipful spirit, and discerns when the Meeting has reached unity on business matters. Currently, there is a Clerking Committee of 6 people who share these clerking responsibilities. These Clerks keep permanent records of the business minutes. They also receive, transmit and acknowledge communications.

Co-Clerks: When the responsibilities and duties of a Clerk are shared between two people.

Recording Clerk: Keeps accurate minutes showing all actions taken by the Meeting for business. Works with communications committee to post minutes of past meetings for business on the private section of the website.

Treasurer: Establishes and maintains financial accounts and records in a professional manner. The Treasurer reviews all disbursements for accuracy and consistency with requests approved by committee clerks. The Treasurer signs all checks, which are most often prepared and recorded by the bookkeeper. The Treasurer works closely with and provides oversight to the bookkeeper, who handles, records and files all receipts and disbursements and reconciles all bank accounts. The Treasurer is responsible for reviewing and approving timely, comprehensive and understandable financial reports prepared by the bookkeeper. The treasurer works closely with the bookkeeper and Finance Committee.

Recorder: Keeps the permanent records of all changes in the status of membership, such as births, deaths, marriages, transfers and withdrawals. The Recorder submits this information once a year to New England Yearly Meeting as part of a statistical report.

Other Functions of the Meeting

Clearness Committees

The clearness committee is a wonderful Quaker process to help people come to clarity on their decisions and actions in critical points in their lives. Any attender or member may request a clearness committee in a time of personal crisis or quandary (for example: Shall I get involved with a special ministry project or not? How can I rearrange my life to find more time for spiritual growth? How can my spouse and I bring more spiritual resources to bear on our marital problems?) Anyone having a personal concern about which he or she would like to seek clearness, should speak to the Clerk or a member of the Ministry and Counsel Committee. You may suggest names of those you would like on the clearness committee. The committee would meet at a mutually convenient time, usually once.

The clearness process is also used when someone requests membership in the meeting or when a couple plans marriage. Requests for marriage and membership clearness committees require a letter to the Meeting, which the clerk gives to Ministry and Counsel Committee. Ministry and Counsel then names a clearness committee, which usually consists of members from Ministry and Counsel Committee and others as well. The committee meets with the couple or person seeking membership to determine their readiness for the proposed course of action. (For more information, see *Marriage Through the Meeting* in Faith and Practice, [page-173](#)).

Though not a therapy group, the clearness committee can help focus issues and probe questions that may not have been previously considered. Friends who have asked for a clearness committee in time of need have testified to the warm support and new insight that such a committee can provide.

Seeker Sessions

Occasionally New Haven Friends Meeting schedules Seeker Sessions. The term refers to the early Quaker phrase “Seekers of Truth”, which early Friends called one another. These sessions are opportunities for us to continue seeking the Truth together. Seeker sessions are coordinated within committees, approved and scheduled at Meeting for Business and announced after meeting for worship, printed in Business minutes, e-mailed, and posted on the bulletin board near the front door. Some sessions, coordinated by Peace and Social Concerns Committee, are devoted to local and world-wide peace and justice topics. In addition, Ministry and Counsel Committee offers sessions to deepen our understanding of Friends worship and practice or address topics pertinent to the spiritual life of the Meeting.

First Day School for Children

Our children are an important part of New Haven Friends, and we value their presence. Children join in meeting for worship for the first 15 minutes. They may then join First Day School classes or remain in Meeting for Worship. First Day School generally begins the week after Labor Day with a break for the Christmas and New Year holidays. The children are grouped into classes by age from pre-school through high school. Classes focus on Quaker history, beliefs, practices and concerns in ways that are age-appropriate. Related activities generally include a fall junior

business meeting to select one or more holiday projects to be brought to the adult meeting for business, a Christmas play, Easter egg coloring and an Easter egg hunt, and a final celebration of the First Day School year on Father's Day with tie-dying and ice-cream sundae-making. Child care is provided by paid staff throughout the year for children aged 0-2 during Meeting for Worship, Meeting for Business and other activities as needed/requested. Members of the meeting lead the First Day School classes and conduct mixed-age summer activities for children. Children also benefit from participation in Quarterly Meeting, Yearly Meeting Retreats, participation in New England Yearly Meeting Sessions in August, and in summer activities at Friends Camp in China, Maine. Parents play a central role in First Day School, and along with other experienced adults in the Meeting, provide a safe and nurturing environment for children.

Adult Study

Throughout the year, individuals or meeting committees may propose and organize adult study sessions. Once a subject matter is identified, one or two individuals assume responsibility, gather necessary materials, schedule a convenient meeting time, and lead one or more sessions. They are open to all wishing to share spiritually. The **Quaker Study Group** aims to present monthly sessions, open to all, on Quaker faith, practice, and history, especially as they relate to current issues of concern.

Financial Aid for Quaker Activities. New Haven Friends Meeting maintains funds for use by members and attenders who need financial support in order to attend Quaker gatherings such as the annual meeting of the Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL), or Friends General Conference (FGC), or the annual sessions of New England Yearly Meeting, or a retreat at Woolman Hill or Pendle Hill. One should approach the Clerk(s) of the meeting or the Clerk of Ministry and Counsel Committee to apply for financial assistance. Members of Ministry and Counsel meet with the individual to discuss the situation and need.

Pastoral Care

Coordinating Care from the Meeting in Times of Acute Need

Pastoral Care is organized by Ministry and Counsel for a variety of needs that any of us might have. (See the Pastoral Care Guidelines for a complete explanation.) In some circumstances, when our needs are acute and time bound, such as recovering from major surgery, it may be difficult to cook, do basic chores, or run normal errands. In these circumstances, the following websites are recommended for communicating to the Meeting what you need and when you need it so that many members and attenders might sign up to help you with meals, chores, errands, etc.: Lotsa Helping Hands website: www.lotsahelpinghands.com or the Caring Bridge website: www.caringbridge.org.

What is Pastoral Care?

As described in *Faith and Practice of New England Yearly Meeting*, pastoral care is a natural expression of love and care among members of a vibrant, connected faith community where members are known and cherished. Concretely, we visit each other, send written communication, and walk with each other through the joys and sorrows of life, offering encouragement and help. It is not only a one-on-one activity; the Meeting also forms committees as needed to meet a need for help and support.

*“Let us remember the need of isolated Friends and invalids for spiritual fellowship and encouragement. Caring for such need is a service in which all of us should seek to share.”
London Yearly Meeting (1929)*

Pastoral care is spiritual, emotional and sometimes hands-on support offered to you by the Meeting. You must take the initiative to make your needs known to the Meeting by communicating with someone on the Ministry and Counsel Committee. Ministry & Counsel is not solely responsible for delivering pastoral care, but does typically take the lead in organizing a caring response by the Meeting.

Needs for pastoral care from our Meeting may arise from a variety of circumstances including (but not limited to):

- The decision to marry;
- A serious medical condition or operation,
- Birth of a child,
- An important personal loss such as: the death of a loved one, divorce, job loss, a difficult housing transition, nearing one’s own end of life, etc.,
- An emergency situation such as an accident, major storm, fire, burglary, assault, family crisis, sudden disability, etc.,
- A spiritual trial that might arise from a serious relationship issue, financial crisis, moral dilemma, work conflict, etc.,
- Memorial services.

Pastoral care may take many forms depending on your need. Here are a few typical examples, but certainly not the only forms of pastoral care that are possible:

- If you are recovering from a major operation, you might request a Care Committee from our Meeting to visit you for spiritual support, and/or to help with meals, chores, or errands that you are unable to do during your recovery period, particularly if you live alone.
- If you have lost your job, you might request either a person or a Clearness Committee to sit with you in order to provide you with emotional support and help you gain clarity on what you wish to do. (For more information about Clearness Committees, please see our Clearness Committee pamphlet.)
- In emergency situations, when your health or safety is at serious risk, the appropriate first response is to call 911. However, if you have dealt with the immediate health or safety issues, and then face a whole new set of emotional and/or practical issues, you may find some pastoral care helpful.
- In some situations, your need may be more long term, such as a chronic illness or grief after death of a loved one. In cases such as these, you might request Ministry & Counsel (M & C) to organize a Care Committee that you meet with periodically.
- When there is a desire for marriage under the Care of the Meeting, couples are given the support of a Clearness Committee to allow them occasion to explore possible problems as well as the strengths in their relationship prior to marriage.
- An individual considering divorce can ask Ministry and Counsel to set up a clearness committee.

- When a member of our Meeting dies and the family requests assistance with a memorial service, M & C assists. At times, it can be a comfort to hold a meeting for worship in your home within a day or two after the death with close friends from Meeting and those family members who wish it.

“If in our pastoral care we are cumbered with much serving, hardly knowing where to find time for all that weighs on us, let us sit at the Lord’s feet. Those who live with Him always seem to have time to love and care for their fellow men, which is denied to those of us who think we can accomplish it in our own strength.” London Yearly Meeting (1951)

What Pastoral Care Is Not

There are many important needs that the Meeting cannot meet. Professional help is needed for:

- Mental illness or substance abuse;
- Abuse within a family;
- Clinical depression;
- Long term care (such as nursing, daily companionship, home care and driving);
- Legal or financial matters.

The Meeting cannot take the place of professionals in medicine, social work, law, and finance. To locate emergency support, use InfoLine, the statewide toll-free source of information and referral of the United Way of CT, reached by telephoning 211.

Our General Orientation toward Pastoral Care at New Haven Monthly Meeting

In most places of worship, there is a paid minister, priest, or rabbi who assumes a pastoral care role, and who actively looks out for, identifies, and contacts congregants who are in need. Since we do not have a paid minister at our Meeting, pastoral care is handled on a volunteer basis by the Ministry and Counsel (M & C) Committee and others in our Meeting community. Our M & C members have various backgrounds, skill sets, and other job and family responsibilities, so M & C’s role is more limited than a professional paid minister’s role typically is. The two most important differences are: 1) responsibility for communicating pastoral care needs to M & C rests with the person who has the need, or someone that that person designates; and 2) the quantity and quality of pastoral care is dependent on the availability and skills of M & C volunteers and other volunteers in our Meeting. That said, our M & C usually has at least one or more members with pastoral care, counseling, or related training who can provide leadership in this area. Everyone on the committee is interested in helping in whatever capacity their time and skills allow. And others in our Meeting are glad to help too.

Procedures for Requesting Pastoral Care in Our Meeting

If you need pastoral care, please do not hesitate to ask for it. Please call any member of the Ministry and Counsel (M & C) Committee that you wish in order to communicate your need. If you wish your request to be kept confidential, please let us know. If you are planning a serious medical procedure, make sure you designate a proxy or health advocate whom you authorize to make medical decisions on your behalf in the event you cannot make them yourself. Instruct that person to call Ministry and Counsel to let us know when we can call or visit and where to send cards. If you will have needs during your recovery period that you wish to communicate to all of

our Meeting, you may wish to consider using the Lotsa Helping Hands or Caring Bridge websites communicate and coordinate your care needs.

End of Life

We are each responsible for making our wishes known about end-of-life care. Please make use of resources such as these to help you and those close to you to consider, talk about, and record what you want others to know and do should you be unable to take charge of decisions for yourself.

- <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/AG/Health-Issues/advdirectivescombinedform2006alt-pdf.pdf>
- <https://agingwithdignity.org/programs/five-wishes/>
- <http://theconversationproject.org/>
- NEYM Faith and Practice, **page-114**
- <http://www.ctendoflifecare.org/>
- <http://medicine.yale.edu/search/?q=Palliative>

Long-Term Care

- **CT Partnership for Long Term Care**
- **CT Long Term Care Ombudsman Program**

Hospice Care

- <http://www.hospice.com/about>
- www.vitas.com (in-home hospice care)

Funerals/Burials

- **Funeral Consumer Alliance of CT**
- **CT Laws about funerals and cremation**
- **Natural "Green" Burials**

THE WIDER QUAKER WORLD

Quaker Organizations in North America --“The Unity of Paradoxical Quaker Extremes”

North American Yearly Meetings

In the United States and Canada, there are a wide variety of Friends in 31 Yearly Meetings. Yearly Meetings choose to associate with one or more of the Friends organizations listed below. The diversity within Friends is evident from this listing. Nevertheless, there is something at the core of each of these traditions that can find unity in the heart of each of the others, so that some Friends find it possible to look across the boundaries between us. New Haven Friends Meeting belongs to both Friends General Conference and Friends United Meeting through our membership in New England Yearly Meeting, which also belongs to both groups.

FUM - Friends United Meeting: Formed in 1966, Friend United Meeting (FUM) grew out of the “Five Years Meeting”. Five Years Meeting was formed in 1902 from the 1887 Richmond, Indiana Conference of meetings subscribing to the “Richmond Declaration of Faith.” Most of the Meetings that are a part of FUM have pastors and are “programmed,” with hymn singing and a sermon, but some FUM meetings are silent. Here is the mission statement of FUM: “Friends United Meeting commits itself to energize and equip Friends through the power of the Holy Spirit to gather people into fellowships where Jesus Christ is known, loved and obeyed as Teacher and Lord.” FUM has partnerships with churches and Yearly Meetings in Belize, Cuba, Jamaica, Kenya, Palestine, Tanzania and Uganda, as well as the United States and Canada. For more information online, see: <https://www.friendsunitedmeeting.org/>

FGC - Friends General Conference: An association of 14 Yearly Meetings and some monthly meetings in the United States and Canada. It began in 1900. Most of the Meetings in FGC are “unprogrammed” or silent meetings, where Friends wait until led by the Spirit to speak. Here is the minute of purpose of FGC: “Friends General Conference, with Divine guidance, nurtures the spiritual vitality of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) by providing programs and services for Friends, meetings, and seekers.” The emphasis of the meetings associated with FGC is on the authority of the direct leading of the Inner Light or Christ Within. Meetings associated with FGC typically not only tolerate but encourage diverse theological perspectives. FGC organizes a week-long annual Summer Gathering around the beginning of July, and also offers a variety of other programs and services to Friends, including their Quaker Bookstore and Press, the Quaker Quest program of outreach, and resources for religious education, education on racism, couple enrichment, and strengthening meetings. Our Meeting had a mortgage from the FGC Meetinghouse Loan Fund when we built the Meetinghouse. www.fgcquaker.org

Conservative Friends: A small number of meetings in Iowa, Ohio, and North Carolina that have split from both of the major streams of Quakerism in the U.S. identify as Conservative Friends. Conservative Friends worship in silent meetings and have an explicitly Christ-centered theology. A website from a Conservative Friends Meeting describes the “original Quaker witness” as “a balance between relying on the Inward Light, identifying the historical Jesus as the eternal Christ, commitment to mending the world, and focusing on evangelizing the Quaker revelation.” www.quaker.us/welcome.html

Evangelical Friends Church International: Consists of six yearly meetings in North America, which have organized to work together on publications and evangelism, founded in 1965. Their worship is programmed, and their meetings or churches have pastors. Here is a statement from their website: “We are drawn together through our clear commitment to Jesus Christ and a common desire to change our local and international worlds for Christ.” They have missions, meetings or churches in many countries around the world, particularly in Guatemala, Bolivia, Burundi, Rwanda, and Congo. See <https://www.efcer.org/>

Friends Organizations Worldwide

AFSC- American Friends Service Committee: Founded in 1917 to provide U. S. conscientious objectors with opportunities to aid civilian victims of World War I. AFSC instituted a major child-feeding program in Germany in 1919. The AFSC and its British counterpart, the Friends Service Council, received the Nobel Peace Prize on behalf of all Quakers, for their work in post-war Europe. Today, AFSC works to end poverty in the U.S., to resist militarism worldwide and promote peace, human rights, and reconciliation. Currently, AFSC runs over 200 separate programs in more than 20 nations. Although Quaker in origin and administration, most of AFSC’s funding comes from outside the Religious Society of Friends. [American Friends Service Committee.](#)

ACFIA- Associated Committee of Friends for Indian Affairs: Oversees and supports work and Friends Centers with Native American tribes in Oklahoma, Iowa and Alabama. It is part of the Friends World Committee on Consultation, [Section of the Americas.](#)

EFCI - Evangelical Friends Church International: Runs Barclay Press and other services for evangelical Friends. Two meetings in Rhode Island belong to EFI, Eastern Region.

FCNL - Friends Committee on National Legislation: Founded in 1943, it is the oldest religious lobby in Washington, D.C. It seeks to influence Congress and the President on matters of concerns to Friends, and while it recognizes that it cannot speak for all Friends, it does an excellent job of speaking truth to power, especially regarding protecting human rights and opposing militarism. FCNL also includes an educational nonprofit organization.

[Friends Committee on National Legislation](#)

FLGBTQC - Friends for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered, and Queer Concerns: Supports issues of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, and queer Friends. [FLGBTQC Quakers](#)

FDS - Friends Disaster Service: Responds to natural disasters (floods/tornadoes, etc.) by sending in trained work crews. [Quakers in Action](#)

FCE - Friends Council on Education: Runs conferences and support of Friends schools and Friends teachers. <http://www.friendscouncil.org/>

FWCC - Friends World Committee for Consultation: Formed in 1937, FWCC includes all types of yearly meetings, FGC, FUM, etc. Its goals are to foster understanding among the various groups of Friends around the world. FWCC is divided into three sections: Europe and East Asia, Africa, and the Americas. Representatives gather for meetings of these sections once every three years. FWCC is a recognized non-governmental organization at the U. N.
<http://fwcc.world/>

Quaker Earthcare Witness: An organization of Friends “taking spirit-led action to address the ecological and social crises of the world from a spiritual perspective, emphasizing Quaker process and testimonies.” <https://quakerearthcare.org>

QUNO - Quaker United Nations Office: Since 1947, this office has provided a link between the UN and Friends. Friends maintain Quaker Houses in both New York and Geneva, where diplomats can meet in a neutral space thereby making progress toward reconciling differences.
<http://www.quno.org/>

Quaker Voluntary Service: An organization supporting Quaker volunteer service, social justice, radical hospitality, and inclusiveness. <http://www.quakervoluntaryservice.org/>

Pendle Hill Conference and Retreat Center: Conference center in PA. Provides adult education and publishes pamphlets. <http://www.pendlehill.org/vision-mission-and-history>

RSWR - Right Sharing of World Resources: A program that encourages personal and local action to practice simplicity and eliminate poverty. <http://www.rswr.org/>

USFWI - United Society of Friends Women International: Supports Friends women’s groups and mission work worldwide.
<http://usfwi.net/>

Woolman Hill: Conference center for New England Friends in western MA.
<http://woolmanhill.org/>

HOW CAN YOU LEARN MORE ABOUT QUAKERISM?

Certainly, the more you attend Meeting for Worship, interact with members of the Meeting and participate in the activities of the Meeting, the better you will understand Quaker worship and philosophy. Nevertheless, people are often curious to know more about not just our form of worship, but Friends’ history and our understanding of the living relationship between God and humankind as well. We have several resources that can help you in exploring these topics.

Meeting Library

Browsing through the Meeting's library is a good place to start.

Books: We have a collection of over 400 books. They are arranged by general subject matter (Quaker History, Quaker Basics, By and About Quakers, Spirituality Healing and Meditation, Bible Studies, Philosophy and Theology, World Religions, Peace and Social Concerns, Children's Books). There is a comprehensive list of our holdings in the Library and on our website at newhavenfriends.org under Resources. You are welcome to borrow books and return them at your convenience. Please follow book check out directions by the library door and return the books after one month or renew them.

Pamphlets: On the top shelf of the bookcases is a complete set of over 350 Pendle Hill Pamphlets arranged chronologically by number. These short essays can be quick yet insightful reads. An index booklet for the pamphlets is located by the first pamphlet (#1). Follow the same checkout instructions as for books.

New England Yearly Meeting's Faith and Practice (1985 edition) can be checked out or you can purchase a copy for \$10 from the library. (Please ask someone where copies available for purchase are located.) It also can be read online for free at <http://neym.org/faith-practice>. This manual explains Quaker thought and history as well as how monthly meetings in New England Yearly Meeting function. It is currently being revised, with many sections available at the Yearly Meeting website. Anyone considering membership should have a thorough grounding in this book. *Quaker Faith and Practice of Britain* is also highly recommended and is in the Library.

Magazines: *Friends Journal* and *Quaker Life* are in the library room. Extra copies, free for the taking, are in a stand, by the meeting room door.

Videos/DVDs: We have a small collection of videos also available for loan. The QuakerSpeak channel on YouTube has more than 80 free short contemporary videos about Quakers and Quakerism. QuakerSpeak is a project of *Friends Journal*.

The Library has literature catalogs from the following Quaker organizations. You are welcome to browse the catalogs and contact them directly.

Friends General Conference Bookstore

1216 Arch Street, 2 B
Philadelphia, Pa. 19107
1-800-966-4556 or (215) 561-1700
<https://www.quakerbooks.org/>

Quaker Hill Bookstore

101 Quaker Hill Drive
Richmond, Indiana 47374
<https://bookstore.friendsunitedmeeting.org/>

Pendle Hill

338 Plush Mill Road
Wallingford, Pa. 19086

<https://pendlehill.org/product-category/view-all/>

In addition to the materials in the library, you are encouraged to attend **seeker sessions**. Reading the **bulletin boards** at the meetinghouse can provide additional information about the wider community of Friends, activities within our monthly meeting, and courses offered by various Quaker groups.

Pendle Hill, a Quaker study and retreat facility in the Philadelphia area, offers short courses on Quaker and spiritual issues, as does Woolman Hill in Deerfield, Mass. New Haven Friends Meeting has a **Friendly Development Fund** that provides financial assistance to those interested in attending these courses. You can speak with a member of the Ministry and Counsel Committee to get more information.

HOW CAN YOU GET MORE INVOLVED?

Our Meeting needs and welcomes everyone's energies, from recent visitors to longtime attenders. For its vitality and growth, the Meeting depends on all its members and attenders to participate as they are able in the activities of Meeting for Worship, Meeting for Business, First Day School, committees, service to others and social gatherings. Newcomers are especially invited to get involved. Newcomers provide fresh perspectives and valuable energies, which are of immediate value even before they feel thoroughly familiar with Friends' ways in general or this Meeting in particular. Participation is, in fact, one of the best ways to learn about our Meeting.

What energies, concerns, and skills can you contribute to support the Meeting activities and to help realize our goals? What new skills can you gain? Remember, what we struggle with individually is given new strength when we work together. Below is a list of some of the many ways you can get involved beyond Meeting for Worship.

Fellowship

Join with Friends following Meeting for Worship downstairs for food and fellowship.

Talk to a member of the fellowship committee about volunteering to help provide snacks for fellowship hour.

Sign up for the meeting email list by emailing nhquakers@gmail.com or by signing up in the foyer of the Meetinghouse. You will receive weekly announcements of events happening at the Meetinghouse.

Attend Meeting for Business in a Spirit of Worship

It is open to everyone. (Third Sunday of the month)

Participate in the consideration of the Meeting's budget, which takes place in December and January Business Meetings.

Join the Bible Study Group: Wednesday evenings 6:30 – 8:15 pm at the Meetinghouse

Join the Stitching Group: Monday evenings 7:00 – 9:00 pm at the Meetinghouse

Join a committee.

With the exception of Ministry and Counsel, all committee meetings are open if you would like to see what a particular committee is like. Then talk to the Nominating Committee about the possibility of joining a committee that is in your area of interest.

Attend Seeker Sessions, retreats, and other special events –

Times and topics are announced following Meeting for Worship as well as on the announcements that are emailed each week.

Attend Adult Study classes

Read the Meeting newsletter or blog: <http://www.newhavenfriends.wordpress.com>

Visit our Facebook page: [New Haven Friends Meeting](#)

Volunteer to help for a week or two or with special activities with **the First Day School** classes.

Help with the work parties held in the fall and spring to maintain the Meeting property.

(Leaf raking, storm window/screen changing, planting, and landscaping). This is an easy and fun way to contribute to Meeting.

If you have a particular knowledge or expertise on a topic you think the Meeting community would enjoy learning about, **consider offering a presentation or discussion session.** Contact the Clerking Committee.

Wider Friends Community

Attend Quarterly Meeting (in Connecticut or western Massachusetts – first Sunday in February and May, 2nd weekend in October)

Attend New England Yearly Meeting (one week in early August). The location changes within New England. An **Equalization Fund** is available for financial assistance enabling all interested to attend.

Attend Friends General Conference Gathering (week of July 4th). Location changes annually and draws Friends from the U.S. and Canada.

Attend the Annual Meeting of the Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL)
Held in Washington, DC in late fall.

Financial Support of the Meeting

Another important way to get involved in New Haven Friends Meeting is to share the costs. We keep up two buildings and contribute to national Quaker Organizations and other international and local charitable causes. No one will ask you directly for a financial contribution or pass a collection plate. No one will suggest an appropriate level of contribution for you or your family; it is left to each individual to decide whether or how much to give. We see financial giving as a personal expression of support for the spiritual life and activities of the Meeting. Any donation, financial or of time and work, is always appreciated. See the Handy Information section at the beginning of this handbook for ways to make a financial contribution.

The budget is decided for each calendar year in Meeting for Business, based on recommendations from the Committees to the Finance Committee. It is reported on at the monthly Meeting for Business. If you want more information, you are welcome to inquire of the Treasurer or members of the Finance Committee.

However you choose to participate in our Meeting, your presence will be valued. We warmly welcome all who wish to join us as fellow seekers and members of a loving community.

GLOSSARY OF USEFUL QUAKER WORDS AND PHRASES

Quakers have developed a terminology all their own over the past three centuries and many of these terms are still in use. Some are wonderful reflections of Quaker faith and practice.

Advices: Ideals stated as a continuing reminder of the basic faith and principles essential to the life and witness of Friends. Advices were put into print as early as 1702. Friends have found it useful to regularly remind one another of their nature through periodic reading and discussion along with related Queries.

Affirm: A legal declaration made by Friends or others who conscientiously decline to take an oath. Since Quakers try to be truthful at all times, it is considered unnecessary to swear to tell the truth, thereby giving the impression of a double standard of truth. Friends in the 17th century were often imprisoned for refusing to swear an oath in court.

As way opens: A process of waiting for guidance, to eschew hasty judgment or action, to wait for further circumstances to help solve the problem. The spiritual guidance that may come is referred to as a “leading”. Leadings may come in a time of seeking or entirely unexpectedly, bringing suggestions for previously unforeseen action.

Attender: One who attends and participates in the Meeting activities regularly but has not become a member.

Birthright Friend: Friend born of Quaker parents, recorded at birth on the membership rolls of a Meeting. No longer a practice in New England Yearly Meeting. See “Membership” section for more detail.

Breaking Meeting: Term used for closing Meeting for Worship when a designated Friend shakes hands with the persons next to him or her.

Center down (centering): This refers to the practice of Friends in trying to eliminate all secular thoughts and feelings from their minds in Meetings for Worship so that God can speak to them directly. We endeavor to reach down to a deeper area in the mind than that of conscious thought.

Clearness Committee: A small group of people appointed to assist a person or the Meeting to clarify thinking about a decision or concern.

Clerk: The Friend who conducts business sessions and carries out the instructions of the meeting on all matters pertaining to the accomplishments of its business. As a verb: to preside or facilitate.

Concern: A concern, whether of an individual or a Meeting, implies a deep interest in some spiritual or social matter; an interest so deep and so vigorous that it often moves to action.

Convinced Friend: One who has studied the background and beliefs of Quakers and who has been led to become a member of the Religious Society of Friends.

Discernment: Wisdom to see clearly, to differentiate the truth or a true leading from other impressions.

Disownment: The practice of dismissing an individual from membership in the Society of Friends. A person could be put out of a Meeting (“read out”) by Monthly Meeting by violating prohibitions or practices. A decision could be reversed if the person repented and asked to be reinstated.

Elders: Discerning Friends chosen to offer guidance and counsel to individuals and the meeting as a whole. This was essentially a nurturing role given to Friends “well-grown in the Truth”. Often elders were paired with recorded ministers, Friends whose capacity for spoken ministry was publicly recognized. In such cases, the elders provided an important form of feedback.

Eldering: Originally viewed as a form of tender evaluation and questioning by the elders. Today, the Ministry and Counsel Committee will gently elder or guide a Friend if they feel the Friend’s behavior is disruptive to the group such as when a message is inappropriate or too long.

Faith and Practice: A book that sets out the beliefs of a group of Friends (usually a yearly meeting) and its ways of doing business. It is sometimes called “The Book of Discipline”.

First day: Sunday. Biblical practice since before Babylonian Captivity was to number the months, not name them. The Society of Friends has followed this practice for the days and

months rather than using names that come from non-Christian sources. Although in recent years the practice is declining in common usage, it is generally followed in official documents. (See: plain speech)

Friends: Members of the Religious Society of Friends; also called Quakers. The term Friends comes from the Gospel of John in the New Testament. The expression “Friends in the Truth” was used in England as early as 1652.

Gathered Meeting: Phrase used to describe those special occasions when the Friends Meeting attains a more than usual sense of Divine Presence, which touches the heart of all worshippers and unites them in a common experience of holy fellowship. (See “The Gathered Meeting” in *A Testament of Devotion* by Thomas R. Kelly.)

Hat honor: The Englishman’s custom of tipping the hat to recognize the higher position of another, expected by the rich and the court. Violations of that custom in the 1600s by Quakers who believed that all were equal in the sight of God led to their imprisonment in England.

Hold in the Light: To contemplate someone’s well-being in a spiritual way, to wish a distressed person well, to pray for.

Inner Light: This refers to the presence of God in our hearts and lives, a reality which guides and directs us, which gives us strength to act on this guidance and which brings us into unity with the spirit of God. This presence of God is different from conscience, which is developed awareness of the merits of faults of our conduct, intentions, or character. The Inner Light is also called the “Inward Light”, the “Light Within”, the “Christ Within”, the “Light of Christ”, or the “Holy Spirit”.

Labor with: Struggle with a concern or problem and work through to a solution, perhaps over a period of months. Laboring may be an individual or a group process.

Lay down: Terminate a committee when its work is completed or no longer felt necessary. A monthly meeting may be laid down when it is no longer functioning as such. **Leadings:** Direction or guidance coming from the Spirit of God for right ways of living; a Friend may submit a leading to the Meeting for testing by corporate wisdom. A *corporate leading* is divine guidance received by a group of worshippers.

Meeting for Business: A regularly appointed time when business concerns of Friends are addressed under the leading of the Spirit. A *called meeting* is a specially scheduled Meeting for Business.

Meeting for Worship: The gathering of Friends to worship under the leading of the Spirit. (See: “Programmed Meeting” and “Unprogrammed Meeting”)

Minute: The written record of a decision and/or action taken in Meeting for Business.

Plain speech: Refers to the use of “thee, thy, thou, and thine” by Friends. People spoken to by given names and no titles. Because the months were named for heathen gods, goddesses and emperors, many Friends prefer to use “First Day”, “Second Day”, and “First Month”, etc.

Pastoral care: is spiritual, emotional and sometimes hands-on support offered to someone from members of the Meeting.

Peace testimony: Witness against war and in favor of peacemaking. Because all life is sacred to Friends, they reject all wars. This testimony was first clearly enunciated in 1661.

Programmed meeting: Meeting for worship usually conducted by a pastor with prearranged program, including music, an offering, a sermon. Some programmed meetings provide periods of silence and meditation.

Quakers: Unofficial name of the Religious Society of Friends, who were said to quake before God’s word; originally a derogatory term.

Queries: Questions for spiritual guidance to be asked and answered by both individuals and Meetings. A listing of queries is in each yearly meeting’s *Faith and Practice*. New queries may also develop as new concerns arise.

Seasoning A process to ensure that decisions truly are grounded in God’s will or in the Light usually by giving extra time to consider what best represents God’s will.

Sense of the meeting: When the Meeting for Business under the guidance of the Holy Spirit comes to be of one mind, one spirit, on the item of business before it, the clerk will state “the sense of the meeting”, the unified (not necessarily unanimous) decision of the meeting. When there is division or lack of unity, an action may be postponed until a later time. Occasionally, a member or members who are in disagreement will “step aside” so that the matter may be carried forward.

Sojourning member: A Friend who is temporarily residing in the area of another Monthly Meeting may become a Sojourning member there.

Speaks to one’s condition: Said of a word or action particularly appropriate to one’s needs, which touches one at the deepest level and helps to clarify a situation or make a right decision. Phrase originated with George Fox.

Speak truth to power: Take a stand for what is right before, for example, government officials and legislative bodies.

Standing aside: Sometimes at Business meeting, a Friend will not be able to unite with the rest of the group, and yet does not feel he or she must try to stop the Meeting from taking action. By standing aside, such Friends allow the recording of a minute with which they cannot unite.

Standing in the Light: A state of being guided by the Inner Light.

State of the Society: A statement of condition from the monthly Meetings, the Quarterly Meetings and the Yearly Meeting.

Testimonies: Public statements or witnesses, based on spiritual experience, which give direction to our lives. Traditionally, Quaker testimonies include the values of Simplicity, Peace, Integrity, Community and Equality (S.P.I.C.E.). A sixth testimony of Stewardship or Sustainability is often cited as well (thus creating the acronym S.P.I.C.E.S.)

Threshing: Seeking for truth as a group, especially in sorting out complex matters. It involves a deep listening with respect for that of God in everyone. Friends believe that truth is frequently found when a community seeks together in openness, love and respect.

Travel Minute: The endorsement a Meeting gives to one of its members who is traveling under the weight of a concern.

Unity: Recognition of the truth emerging from a group's corporate search and yielding to the Holy Spirit in its decision making.

Unprogrammed meeting (silent meeting): Meeting for worship with no previously arranged order. The gathered Friends sit in silence, waiting upon God and the leading of the Spirit, which might give rise to vocal messages to share with the Meeting. Meetings for worship spent in complete silence can also be occasions of great inspiration.

Weighty Friend: Friends recognized for speaking in a manner which reflects the leading of the Spirit and showing an ability to evaluate the truth of a situation.

Witness: Used as a noun or verb: one who testifies to or shows evidence of religious beliefs and convictions.

Worship sharing: An informal Quaker practice in which everyone who wishes to speak on a given topic may do so (going around in a circle) and without argumentative cross-talk. Like messages in Meeting for Worship, comments made in worship sharing should be based on one's personal experiences of the heart and soul, rather than on others' theories or statements.

Definitions taken from:

- 1) *Dictionary of Friends Terms*. Beatrice Kimball and Joyce Holden, compilers. Friends United Press, 42 pp.
- 2) *Glossary of Faith and Practice*, Pacific Yearly Meeting
- 3) *Faith and Practice*, New England Yearly Meeting
- 4) *Faith and Practice*, New York Yearly Meeting, Appendix II