

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



I promise you that you cannot get into God's kingdom, unless you accept it the way a child does.

--Mark 10:15 [CEV]

God is kindness.

--Duncan Steele-Maley,
 7-yr.-old at Midcoast Friends First-Day School

November

Sunday November 15 Rise of Meeting Monthly Meeting for Business

December

Thursday December 3 4:30 p.m. Ministry & Counsel
 Sunday December 6 Rise of Meeting Potluck Lunch
 Saturday December 12 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. *FCMPP, Alford Youth Center, Waterville
 Sunday December 13 Rise of Meeting *Christmas Fair & Party (Please bring finger food to share)
 Sunday December 20 Rise of Meeting Monthly Meeting for Business

January

Sunday January 3 Meeting for Worship *New Year's Candle-Lighting Service
 Rise of Meeting Potluck Lunch
 Thursday January 7 4:30 p.m. Ministry & Counsel

*Look inside for more information regarding these items.
 ~Calendar events are held at the meetinghouse, unless otherwise noted.~

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

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

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

Highlights

Monthly Meeting for Business--November 15, 2009

A false fire alarm recently pointed to the need for a **lock box on the front door**. This has been ordered.

Efforts to **improve insulation** of the building are underway. There are also efforts to **regulate the temperature** in the all-purpose room.

Gifts & Leadings has submitted 7 recommendations to be published in the newsletter [*ed. note: see p. 5*].

Two requests for membership and two memorial minutes are in process. Ministry & Counsel will contact several members who have been inactive for some time, asking them to consider their status.

The Peace Center held a meeting with representatives from four area congregations. There is hope that we may be able to work on a project.

Religious Education teachers have volunteered for all First Days of the school year. The theme this year is care of the earth.

Friends will please label and date items they place in the refrigerator.

Friends considered how to respond to the recent defeat of the **same-sex marriage referendum**. Will we create a new minute to endorse same sex "marriages" rather than "civil unions"? The matter was referred to Ministry & Counsel.

December 13 will be the date of the **Christmas Party**. Please bring lightly used items for sale to benefit a charitable organization in Haiti. Please also bring finger food.

January 3 will be the date of the **New Year's Candle-Lighting Service** followed by a potluck. Friends will please bring candleholders.

The **next meeting for business will take place Sunday December 20**, at the rise of meeting for worship. All are welcome. Please bring a bag lunch. The entire pending minutes of the November session are available at the Meeting website www.midcoastfriendsmeeting.org and on the bulletin board at the meetinghouse.



The Meeting will celebrate Christmas with a **HOLIDAY FAIR AND PARTY** on Sunday December 13. Sylvia Tavares hopes to come with her lovely handmade jewelry as she has for many years. Friends are asked to bring "lightly used items" that might be just the thing to purchase for our gift-giving this year. Please put a price on each item. Friends are also encouraged to bring art and crafts to sell. We are all asked to bring finger food for the festive table. The money raised in the sale will go to a worthy cause yet to be determined. Also available will be:

FAIR TRADE ORGANIC COFFEE from the Jeannette community in Haiti. Beautifully packaged, perfect for a hostess gift and other holiday giving. (Take a look at www.SingingRooster.org. Learn all about the coffee and see the beautiful children who benefit from sales.)

HANDMADE CRAFTS AND GIFTS from Aardvark Alley--drums, wooden bowls, jewelry, and more --made in Kenya. Purchases benefit the Korando Faith Widows and Orphans group. This project was started about four years ago by Grace von Tobel of Waterville, after a trip she made to Kenya. (View the crafts and learn more about Korando at www.aardvarkalley.net.) This year Grace is visiting many church fairs to show and sell these beautiful items. It's a great way to shop for Christmas, and you can welcome Grace to Midcoast Friends!

THE QUAKER MOTTO CALENDAR--A GIFT FROM THE HAVILANDS

For many years the Havilands have enjoyed giving family and friends the Quaker Motto Calendar at Christmas. Once again Pete and Deb would like to give this gift to all members and attenders of Midcoast Meeting. Calendars will be on the credenza in early December. Please take one and enjoy it. It comes with love and wishes for a peaceful and joyous 2010.

Queries: PEACE & RECONCILIATION-- Do you "live in the virtue of that life and power that takes away the occasion of all wars"? Do you faithfully maintain Friends' testimony against military preparations and all participation in war, as inconsistent with the teachings and spirit of Christ? Do you strive to increase understanding and use of non-violent methods of resolving conflicts?

Do you take your part in the ministry of reconciliation between individuals, groups, and nations? When discouraged, do you remember that Jesus said, "Peace is my parting gift to you, my own peace, such as the world cannot give. Set your troubled hearts at rest, and banish your fears"? (John 14:27 NEB)

The following message from Diana White was submitted by Carmen Lavertu, who said, "We are hoping that Midcoast Friends would attend to hear Andy [Burt]'s presentation and just because FCMPP is a very important group that needs renewal with younger members. Diana White is succeeding Ed Snyder and the opportunity that Andy is bringing of involving the tribal people in the climate change issues is very exciting."

From: Diana White, Co-Chair, FCMPP " <dianaw@maine.edu>

Subject: **FCMPP Meeting Scheduled for December 12 in Waterville**

Our next Friends Committee on Maine Public Policy meeting will take place at the Alford Youth Center in Waterville on Saturday December 12 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. (Directions below.) Bring bag lunch.

We are very fortunate to have as our morning speaker Andy Burt, who will be sharing information on Maine Indians' work on environmental issues. We may be joined by a tribal member that day, but that has not been confirmed. Andy is a member of Midcoast Meeting who has worked with the Maine Council of Churches on global-warming and food-security issues. This fall, Andy met with community and tribal members in Washington and Aroostook counties to discuss local environmental initiatives.

Afternoon FCMPP business session. Among the items we will consider:

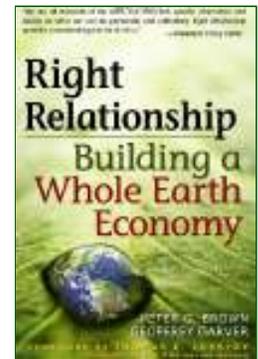
1. Continuing our discussion about a possible FCMPP environmental focus relating to our two major priorities: criminal justice and Maine Indians.
2. The FCMPP Legislative Committee and process for handling legislative issues in the next session of the Maine legislature.
3. How to strengthen or deepen the involvement of Meetings and individuals in the committee's actions and activities aside from or in addition to attending the full Committee meetings.

Directions to Alford Youth Center: From I-95 to Waterville, Exit 34, south on Main Street, at 2nd intersection light turn right onto Eustis Parkway until it T's into North Street, turn left on North Street. After several hundred yards of playing fields on the right, turn right into the parking lot for Alford Youth Center, the new building on right. Check at main desk to find meeting room.

ADVICES

Peace & Reconciliation-- Every human being is a child of God with a measure of God's Light. War and other instruments of violence and oppression ignore this reality and violate our relation with God. Let us keep primary, therefore, Friends' concern for removing the causes of war. Let us seek, through God's power and grace, to overcome in our own hearts the emotions that lie at the root of violence. At every opportunity, let us be peacemakers in our homes, in our communities, and in our places of work. Let us take care that we who declare against war do not nourish the seeds of war in our possessions. Friends are urged to support those who witness to their governments and take personal risks in the cause of peace, who choose not to participate in war as soldiers nor to contribute to its preparations with their taxes. Let us support in all possible ways the development of international order, justice, and understanding.

We invite you to join us in an exploration of the concept of right relationship and its impact on each of us and the Meeting, starting in January, one Sunday a month (date to be announced). This study group will be based on the book *Right Relationship: Building a Whole Earth Economy* by Peter G. Brown and Geoffrey Garver. We invite you to read the introduction and chapter 1. You are welcome to join us, even if you have not read the book.



The authors of *Right Relationship* define the Quaker principle of right relationship as "respecting the integrity, reliance, and beauty of human and natural communities." They also refer to "human and natural communities" as the "commonwealth of life." They maintain that orienting ourselves toward living with the principle of right relationship as our guideline and goal is essential in building a healthy ecology and economy.

Watch for our coming announcement in the January newsletter. Two queries to consider on this topic are: What is wealth? What increases well-being? [Ed. note: you can see short articles on this book in both the September and October issues of the newsletter.]

A Message from Henry Beerits's Family

Midcoast Meeting has received a generous contribution from the family of Henry Beerits. There was a covering letter from Janet Beerits, which is reproduced here:

To the Midcoast Meeting of Friends at Damariscotta:

Please accept this gift from Henry Beerits as a token of our gratitude for the gift you gave us all at his memorial service. There is no way we can repay you for the good we received at that time and subsequently.

For myself, I want you to know that at Henry's Memorial Service I was able to relate to him in a new and rewarding way as a presence instead of a loss. This source of comfort and strength has stayed with me ever since.

Many friends and family members have spoken to me about the strength and comfort they received by sharing Henry's Memorial Service.

Thank you all – but special thanks to Peter Haviland and Claire Darrow

*Gratefully,
Janet Beerits (spokesperson for Henry's Family)*

From the Working Parties on Racism, Framingham Friends Meeting and NEYM.

Portraits of African American Leaders: This special exhibit, on loan from the Smithsonian Institute to the Museum of African American History, features images of 69 leaders over 150 years. The theme "Let Your Motto Be Resistance [to Enslavement]" is a quotation from Henry Highland Garnet, abolitionist, editor, and clergyman in the 1840s. It will remain at the museum at 46 Joy Street on Beacon Hill, Boston, until January 10. Free admission.

Gift Books. Two beautifully illustrated books for young Friends (11 and up?) come highly recommended. *Let's Talk About Race* by Julius Lester with artist Karen Barbour encourages the readers to tell and hear stories about others instead of looking at their outer appearance. Lester, a resident of western Massachusetts, is a long-time civil-rights activist and musician. *Muhammad*, written and illustrated by Demi, author of other children's books like *Gandhi* and *Buddha*, tells of the Prophet Muhammad's life, emphasizing that the Prophet's message was the same as given to the Old Testament prophets and Jesus. It is said to be the first biography of the Prophet for children in a Western language. Both books may be ordered from www.quakerbooks.org.

DISCERNING JOBS ESSENTIAL TO THE MEETING

On October 28, Gifts & Leadings facilitated a meeting with Midcoast Friends entitled "Discerning Jobs Essential to the Meeting." This followed up the worship sharing on September 20, "'How Can We Keep Our Meeting Vital?'"

The goal of the meeting was to evaluate if and how the work that needs to be accomplished is getting the required attention and how we can be open to new or alternative ways of accomplishing tasks and conducting outreach while forging a strong sense of community. Participation in the earlier discussion was high. In evaluating the earlier meeting, the Gifts & Leading Committee drew on the comments and thoughts of members and formulated recommendations that could be presented to the full membership at Monthly Meeting.

Committee members felt that the process of discerning what might make the Meeting more vital and active is one that will take some time, since it requires that we talk with each other and work together to accomplish any changes. The committee estimates that it will take nine months to implement the following recommendations. Gifts & Leadings agreed to meet four times a year with special called meetings, if necessary.

The following are the recommendations for Monthly Meeting that will be considered at Business Meeting on Sunday, December 20.

1. Based on feedback and comments from members, we recommend that twice a year Meeting members gather to discuss the health of the meeting and that members work together to be open to new ideas, suggestions, and thoughts.
2. Currently, the standard procedure is for all committees of the Meeting to report every month. Based on a recommendation by a Meeting member and endorsed by other members, Gifts & Leadings recommends that one committee be featured each Business Meeting, so members can concentrate more on thinking about the direction and needs of each committee.

The Gifts & Leadings Committee also recognizes that some areas of members' concerns transcend and overlap with the committee structure. Therefore, the committee also recommends, on months when a committee is not featured, that the topic of outreach, spiritual development and education, or service also be included on the Monthly Meeting Business Agenda as a separate agenda item for wider discussion and contemplation. We hope that the emphasis of these discussions will be on talking and working together. At Business Meeting, the committees that are not featured but have issues to discuss may, as always, ask to be placed on the agenda.

3. Recognizing that there has been a Meeting Handbook in years past and that a current one is not now available, the Gifts & Leadings Committee recommends that, along with updating the Meeting Handbook, we update job descriptions for the committees, for the clerk of the Meeting, the recording clerk, and the treasurer. To ensure timely completion of these job descriptions, it was suggested that each committee be asked to present their job descriptions at the first Business Meeting at which they would be featured. The clerk will send copies of the old handbook committee description to all committees. The job description will make it easier for attendees, new people, and current members to get involved in the work of the Meeting and be a guide for the committees.
4. With attendees and newcomers, we would like to recommend that a process be developed for asking people what they are interested in knowing about the Meeting and that this include designating several members to follow up to make sure that people are getting the information or help they need. The Gifts & Leadings Committee recommends that the emphasis be on identifying the types of things that would make it easier for members and attenders to be involved in the meeting.
5. The Gifts & Leadings Committee recognizes that many, many members of the Meeting are involved in service to their neighbors and in the wider world. The act of providing service is of high value for Friends. The Gifts & Leadings Committee recommends that time be dedicated for members to meet and talk about service that we might also perform as a community.

continued next page

6. Gifts and Leadings, upon the recommendations and advice of members, recommends that Ministry & Counsel focus its work and discussions on supporting and nurturing silent and vocal ministry within our meeting. There was the sense that Pastoral Care is doing a very good job of caring for members.
7. As a result of conversations with members, Gifts & Leadings also recommends that a new category be created of "Resource People," which will include people who are willing to do special jobs when asked.



The New Year's Candle-

Lighting will take place during Meeting for Worship on January 3. While it is not required, those who wish to do so may bring a candle to light (in a holder, please). The vocal ministry during this Light celebration is often about reflections on the past year and hopes for the new one.

A Recent Note to Midcoast Friends from Jean Crawford

Dear Friends,

Thank you for the beautiful Holiday Cactus, which has been accompanying me for over a week and will go home with me soon. It is something I will enjoy for a nice long time, especially when the coral blossoms bloom. I'm grateful for your thoughtfulness.

Fond wishes and see you soon,

Jean C.