

January 2012

NEWSLETTER



173 N. PROSPECT ST. BURLINGTON VERMONT 05401

Burlington Friends Meeting

Ministry in the Meeting

Anne Liske, co-clerk of Ministry and Counsel

During the final session to discuss Brian Drayton's book "*On Living with a Concern for Gospel Ministry*", those present reflected on the different kind of "ministry" Brian describes, from the seasoned vocal messages that many might assume by the title to be his focus, to the examples of service to one's meeting all of which he also sees as ministry. He writes:

"An older man, who almost never spoke in meeting, was chiefly loved for his gift of sympathetic listening and quiet, wise conversation....He was especially effective at encouraging younger people who spoke in meeting, his quieter comments showing that he had been listening with interest, reverence and good judgement both to what was said, and what might lie behind the words—hidden even from the speaker." Or,

"Another Friend comes to mind, cheerful and direct, deeply steeped in scripture from her youth, and gifted in prayer and song....Her ministry in meeting was often brief and simple, and usually ended in a short prayer; but her concern was enacted in many other channels by correspondence, conversation, and fellowship. She was often a spreader of news from meeting to meeting...by connecting people or meetings who should know about each other. Any time together, with a single person, a committee, or a meeting, was a chance to recognize a blessing."

His examples lead us to again encourage all members and attenders at Burlington Friends Meeting to consider reading this very accessible book, and to consider the following queries in relationship to our meeting:

What does it mean to minister to the meeting?

What does it mean to serve the meeting?

How are these two roles both different and the same?

How do I seek Divine guidance and spiritual support from others to discern how best to serve the meeting?

What does it mean to step forward and step back as the needs of the meeting change, as others with new and untapped gifts step forward, and as what I offer may become useful in a new/different purpose?

This is the time of year that Gifts and Services Committee will begin their discernment and inquiry of members and attenders about ways they might serve the meeting. Please consider a role that you might take on in the life of the meeting. Speak to others about your interests, ideas and questions you may have. A copy of the meeting handbook describing current committees can be found on the meeting website, or ask Ministry and Counsel if you would prefer a printed copy.

When Diane Montgomery-Logan, Ruah Swennerfelt and Honor Woodrow reach out to each of us over the next few months to ask "what canst thou do?", let's support and encourage them by, as Brian Drayton says, "learning the shape of [our own] particular gift, or...considering that of others." Let's help these three discern a full slate of committees for next year, representing the diverse interests and gifts available in the meeting community, to deepen ministry and service large and small.

www.burlingtonquakers.org

Alice Bassett, In Memoriam

Alice McLaren Fisher Cook Bassett died at home with family on Dec. 28, 2011. She was 86 years old and had been a resident of Wake Robin Retirement Community in Shelburne since 1993. Born in 1925 in Lyndonville, the daughter of Clayton Fisher (1894-1987) and Alberta Campbell Fisher (1903-1981), Alice grew up in New London, N.H., and Lyndonville. Her parents taught chemistry and music at Colby (now Colby- Sawyer) Junior College. Alice graduated from Colby, and on May 21, 1944, she married Clinton Dana Cook II, the son of a St. Johnsbury builder and a graduate of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Clint worked as a chemist for GE during World War II. He earned a M.S. degree from UVM and a Ph.D from [Ohio State University](#). When he died in 1969, he was Vice President for Academic Affairs at UVM; the Cook Physical Sciences Building is named for him.

Alice, a homemaker and mother of five all of whom survive: Dana of Toronto, Canada; Allison of Northampton, Mass.; Polly of Portland, Ore.; Tim of South Portland, Maine; and Cindy, of Adamant. Their families have gone on to produce 10 grandchildren and seven great-grand- children, with another on the way. Widowed at age 44, Alice went back to school, earning a B.A. from UVM in 1971. She was elected to Phi Beta Kappa in recognition of academic excellence, and worked as manager of the Shakespeare Festival, a position she enjoyed thoroughly.

In 1977, Alice met Thomas Day Seymour Bassett, a retired UVM history professor and archivist. Both sang in the choir at College Street Congregational Church. With mutual enthusiasms which included hiking, canoeing, gardening and music, they married in 1979. Tom died at age 87 in 2001. The author of several books on Vermont history, Tom Bassett was also a moving force in the Burlington Friends Meeting (Quakers).

With encouragement from Tom and her father, and building on her experiences as a League of Women Voters activist in the 1960s, Alice Bassett ran for state representative in 1983. As a Democrat in Burlington's Ward One district, a liberal bastion, she won hands down, spending the munificent sum of \$51 in her first campaign. She held the seat until 1992. She asked that the photo she used in that campaign be used with this obituary. An ardent environmentalist, Alice served on the House Natural Resources Committee. She was particularly proud of her role in getting Burlington's run-down waterfront transformed into a park enjoyed by thousands. She also took pride in the civility of the legislative community of which she was a part. She took on leadership roles in a number of areas of interest including music, environmental and peace related causes, and the governance of her church and the Wake Robin community. In all these roles, it was very important to her to engage with issues in ways that respected the views of others. She asks that any donations in her memory be made to the Nature Conservancy.

A memorial service will be held at the College St. Congregational Church on Saturday, Jan. 14, 2012, at 10 a.m., with a reception following at Wake Robin.

For an additional commentary on Alice Bassett go to:

<http://www.burlingtonfreepress.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2011111230044>

Young Adult Friends Climate Change Working Group

On January 15 the Young Adult Friends Climate Change Working Group from New England Yearly Meeting will make a presentation from 1-3 pm, after Meeting for Worship and simple lunch. Please plan to attend and learn what this group of young friends is doing to engage meetings and individuals across New England on how we can more actively address issues of climate change and make life choices that better steward the earth and our environment. Watch for a more detailed announcement on the elist. Contact Rosemary Zimmermann for more information.

Burlington Friends Monthly Meeting for Business

December 11, 2011 (next minute 2011-15)

Presiding Clerk: Louis Cox

Recording Clerk: Rosemary Zimmerman, substituting for Linda McKenna

The meeting opened with a reading by the presiding clerk from a Pendle Hill pamphlet by Bill Taber, "The Mind of Christ."

Present: Louis Cox, Rosemary Zimmermann, Louise Brill, Jim Geier, Anne Liske, Marcia Mason, Christopher McCandless, Jean McCandless, Jonathan McCandless, Diane Montgomery-Logan, Jeanne Plo, Lynne Silva, Roger Silva, Ruah Swennerfelt, Caroline Tasse, Jane VanLandingham, and Elinor Yahm.

We heard a report from Property Committee, which we accepted with gratitude. The text of the report is appended below. A concern arose about the use of polyurethane wood finish on the new library shelving, which is in an enclosed space. Jeanne Plo will send an e-mail to the community when polyurethane is applied so that those sensitive may avoid it.

We heard a brief report from Finance Committee, which we accepted with gratitude. We are behind in pledged contributions; we are strongly encouraged to fulfill our pledges, and Christopher McCandless will send a reminding e-mail to the list-serve. Despite the lag in contributions, our balance sheets for this year have evened out, thanks in large part to an increased use of space.

The general outlines of a 2012 budget were presented. Friends are encouraged to submit comments and thoughts in writing or in person, and to join the committee (Caroline Tasse, Marcia Mason, and treasurer Christopher McCandless serving ex officio) when they meet in January.

Ministry & Counsel presented a slightly revised draft of the nascent confidentiality policy. There was a concern about the preservation of documents that may be confidential and yet potentially relevant legally, such as issues with our tenants. Ministry and Counsel is releasing this work to the committees; they will report back to business meeting by March.

Lynne Silva is stepping down as co-clerk of Ministry & Counsel (but staying on the committee). Jane VanLandingham will fill out the remainder of the year.

The Naming Committee proposes the following slate for vacancies on the Gifts & Service Committee: Diane Montgomery Logan – 2013, Clerk; Ruah Swennerfelt – 2014; Honor Woodrow – 2012. Spencer Smith has chosen not to serve out the remaining year of her term. We are asking that Gifts & Service present a slate by April, to be accepted for seasoning and approved in May.

Peace, Justice, & Earthcare presented a report, which was accepted with gratitude. Burlington's Minute on nuclear power has been distributed, with a cover letter (appended), to all meetings, worship groups, and preparative meetings in New England Yearly Meeting. At Burlington's next business meeting, PJ&E will present proposals for direct action grounded in the commitments we made in that minute.

Diane Montgomery-Logan will post both Minute and cover letter on the website; they will also be distributed on the list-serve.

The Library Committee plans to move the books in January. We encourage those with allergies to dust and mold to proactively communicate their needs with the Library Committee. We are missing half of our *Worship in Song* hymnals. Louise Brill will send a notice to the list-serve in hope of their speedy return.

We heard a brief report from Northwest Quarterly Meeting, which took place on 12/4/11. Among other business, clearness was reached on a minute opposing Vermont Yankee, the text of which is appended below. The next Quarterly Meeting will be March 3rd through 4th, and will be co-hosted by Monadnock and Quaker City.

Minutes, *Continued*

Burlington's January business meeting will include a "visioning" session on our dreams for our property.

Gifts & Service Committee: Christopher McCandless (no report this month).

Report of the Property Committee

The Property Committee has evaluated the Use of Space at BFM by the Center for Mindful Learning. The Scheduler has worked closely with Soryu and Lida for the last two months, as well as Kevin Chap, their Chief of organizational matters. The group has followed the guidelines as outlined by the Property Committee and approved at the August Monthly Meeting for Business. They have been paying \$200/month for having access to unused or unreserved space in the Bassett House, and have been sensitive to making accommodations for all our other uses of reserved space in the Bassett House. They are reserving space (largely in the Meeting House) for public events and paying the usual and customary rates for a regular Sunday evening Sangha, as well as classes in Mindfulness, Yoga and Meditation. They have established friendly communication with other tenants and have followed guidelines for parking. They have made arrangements with the Synagogue to occasionally use up to three additional parking spaces. Well-satisfied that the terms of our agreements are being met, the Property Committee approved the use of unreserved space in the Bassett House by the Center for Mindful Learning, at a rate of \$200/month, on a permanent basis for the coming year.

MAINTENANCE: Lead abatement painting has been accomplished on the Bassett House exterior walls. The dryer vent in the basement was cleaned out. A broken window in the basement was repaired with the installation of double-panes of plexiglass. On Workday, a significant amount of work was accomplished, such as hauling huge loads of trash to the dump. Storm windows were installed in the Bassett House but have yet to be installed in the Meeting House. John Moore and Chris will complete this job. Leaves were raked during the week by Soryu and Jim's employees

SCHEDULING: \$6,553 has been received so far for the use of space. Last year we brought in less than \$5,000. The bottom line is that scheduling is going well. Friends were pleased with this report and one Friend suggested that we notify past users of space to remind them about our available space.

HERITAGE TREE COMPANY has removed large piles of brush on the grounds and around the garage, clearing up significant space. The cedar trees on the southwest perimeter of the property have been trimmed, making it possible to walk around the vegetable garden. The encroaching cedars around the Patricia Bassett White Pine Memorial Tree have been cut back and the Boston Ivy has been trimmed, freeing it to grow upwards and outwards

SNOW REMOVAL: Patrick Weiss and another young man will be taking care of snow removal this Winter. Property Committee is considering the services of a snow plow during heavy snow falls.

Irene Relief: Kevin Chap will be picking up useful items from the garage to take down to Stratford, Vermont, where people are still in need of basics because of heavy flood damage during Hurricane Irene.

Zed Zabski has made a proposal to contribute funds for the purpose of renovating the Bassett House Kitchen. The Property Committee has briefly discussed his proposal and agreed to continue talking about his offer at the next property Committee Meeting. This proposal could possibly be incorporated into the Meeting's Envisioning process due to take place in February of 2012.

Library construction report: The library is nearly complete. Only the shelves need to be installed.

Meeting concluded with silent worship at 3:04 pm.

Please plan to attend *Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business on January 8*. We will be finishing the discussion of our Property Stewardship Priorities which we were unable to complete earlier this fall. Please refer to the visioning grid that was provided at the November Meeting for Business and in minutes of that meeting included in the December newsletter.

Composting at Meeting

By Ruah Swennerfelt

You may have noticed that there is now a visible compost bucket in the kitchen area of the meetinghouse. You might ask why there's an effort to compost the few Sunday scraps, making yet more work for all of us who are feeling quite busy in our lives. Several of us at an Adult Religious Education session, exploring Brian Drayton's book, came to the conclusion that we needed to compost at Meeting and we were willing to do the work. Why?

At the Vermont Interfaith Power and Light conference last month the Episcopalians had a display about composting and a brochure that explained why this was important spiritual work. I picked up the brochure and want to share some of the contents with you and see if you reach the same conclusion that I did—composting is a spiritual act in concert with our living rightly on Earth. Here's what they said:

Composting by Faith Communities

Earth Stewards Committee of the Episcopal Diocese of Vermont

Over the past century we “homo consumes” have taken from the abundance and trashed whatever we didn't use. This has contributed to a demand for more and more goods and a huge pile of waste—a predicament that is simply unsustainable. The consequences of the ‘straight line’ consumption ethic run from the release of toxic gases into the atmosphere to the failure to use these resources for future benefit. This must cease.

As we have begun to understand with regard to inorganic material—glass, metal, etc. (which we call recycling)—so we need now to understand with regard to organic material as well. Organic material enables us to see the change from a ‘straight line’ to a ‘closed loop’ in an up close and personal way.

A ‘closed loop’ means that we take from the abundance we have been given, use of it graciously, and return what we cannot use or have no further use for, so it can be used again. In other words, we don't throw anything away—i.e. into the trash can/landfill—that can be used again in one way or another.

Typically, organic matter, the majority of which is kitchen ‘scraps’ or lawn and garden ‘waste,’ has been considered trash. Herein lies the needed paradigm switch: these are precisely the ingredients with which we need to ‘close the loop.’ These represent the makings of new soil, new plants, new food, a new abundance, from which we benefit all over again.

That's composting! That's using our ‘waste’ to contribute to making something new. That's not throwing it away. That's keeping it within the ‘loop’ in such a way that it is not treated as trash, but as an organic resource. The landfills are diminished. The soil is replenished.

The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. (Gen 2:15)

We know that God is the gardener/creator; humankind is the steward.

We know of the cycle of birth-death-rebirth, of grow-die-grow again. We know that the creation cycle has no beginning or end.

We know that in the creation cycle there is no such thing as waste; we cannot throw anything away; we need to recycle everything.

Therefore, we need to recycle our organic matter as a part of God's cycle of creation. Organic ‘waste’ is a needed resource— it is a part of that cycle of creation.

We bring our organic ‘waste’ to the altar, in thanksgiving for all that God has provided for us.

Next Spiritual Breakfast

On January 29 is the next spiritual breakfast. Join us for breakfast from 8:45-9:15; please feel free to bring a favorite breakfast item to share. Spencer Smith will then be sharing her spiritual journey from 9:15 until 10:30. Contact Jane Van LANDINGHAM for details.

Burlington Friends Meeting
 173 N. Prospect St.
 Burlington, VT 05401



Burlington Friends Meeting Events

All at the Meeting House unless noted

DATE	EVENT	CONTACT/COMMITTEE
Each Sunday	Meeting for Worship - 11 am	Anne Liske (497-0154)
Each Wednesday	Meeting for Worship—Noon	Paul Hood (865-0403)
January 15 & 29	Children’s Religious Education & Family First Day School—10:30 a.m. and infant/toddler care	Ellyn Leamon (434-7744) or Jean McCandless (862-8665)
January 8 & 22	Multi-age Child Care during Worship	Ellyn Leamon (434-7744) or Jean McCandless (862-8665)
January 8	Meeting for Worship for Business—12:45	Louis Cox

Advices and Queries (NEYM Draft)

Remember that love is a gift of the Divine Spirit, not simply a human emotion. As imperfect human beings it is not always possible to feel loving toward one another, but by opening to the Light Within, we can receive and give love beyond our human abilities.