



July 2018

Minutes & Reports

Friends Meeting at Cambridge

Meeting for Business in Worship

June 10, 2018

Inside this issue:

Minutes, June MBW	1
Minutes, June Adjourned MBW	5
Nominating Report	8
Report on Sessions on Future of FMC	9
Report by Youth Ministries and Education Coordinator	15
Report by Resident Friend	16

Friends Meeting at Cambridge (FMC) gathered in a Meeting for Business in Worship (MBW) on Sunday, June 10, at 1:15 pm. The Meeting was convened by Deborah Colgan, Co-Presiding Clerk, after a period of silent worship, with 48 people present. The Clerk opened the Meeting by reading a quotation from Parker J. Palmer's *Let Your Life Speak: Listening for the Voice of Vocation*:

If we are to live our lives fully and well, we must learn to embrace the opposites, to live in a creative tension between our limits and our potentials. We must honor our limitations in ways that do not distort our nature, and we must trust and use our gifts in ways that fulfill the potentials God gave us. We must take the no of the way that closes and find the guidance it has to offer—and take the yes of the way that opens and respond with the yes of our lives.

Announcements

2018-043

Remembering Friends: Deborah Colgan, Co-Presiding Clerk, asked the community to remember several individuals and groups of Friends who are ill or have experienced trauma and to hold them in the Light.

New Staff Hire: Greg Woods, Youth Ministries and Education Coordinator, reported that Pearl Kerber, who has been FMC's Nursery Coordinator, will be leaving as of June 17, 2018. He announced that he had hired a Nursery Lead Teacher, Eliza Myers, who grew up at FMC and will be starting in the position next Sunday.

Gun Buy-Back Program: Deborah Colgan reported that Friends Meeting at Cambridge had again joined the Gun Buy-Back program. The event took place on Saturday, June 9.

Threshing Session on the Personnel Policy of Friends United Meeting (FUM): The Clerks' Team will be holding a Threshing Session on Sunday, September 30, 2018.

Fundraising: Ed Rodley, Clerk of Fundraising Committee, announced that the Fundraising Committee had set a goal of \$230,000 at the beginning of the year and that presently \$220,000 had been given to the Meeting. He encouraged Friends to give what they were able to before the month's end.

Membership Committee

2018-044

Wendy Sanford and Catherine Preston Connolly, Co-Clerks of Membership Committee, presented three individuals who are being recommended for membership: Jessica Ronalds, Otavia Propper and Yaniré Zamora-Rodriguez.

Friends approved these memberships with delight.

Wendy announced that Membership Committee has received an application for membership from Elise Springuel and a clearness committee has been appointed to meet with her.

Wendy reported that member Martha Mangelsdorf has been led to a deep and meaningful spiritual home in the small, reviving New Bedford Monthly Meeting. Martha requests we transfer her membership there. Friends accepted the transfer with love and support.

Friends held the Committee in the Light and thanked them for their hard work.

BCCG Grant Recommendations

2018-045

Jennifer Hogue, Clerk of the Beneficial Cycle Coordinating Group (BCCG), brought forward the request from FMC's Community of Hope Pastoral Care program to fund the paid coordinator for the upcoming year with a clear plan for ongoing discernment regarding the necessity and possibility of continued funding in the future. Friends approved this request.

Nominating Committee—First Reading

2018-046

Betsy Hewitt from Nominating Committee listed the members of the Committee and Friends held them in the Light and thanked them for their hard work.

She presented a report containing thoughts from the Committee (see this edition of *Minutes & Reports*). The Clerk thanked the Committee for their thoughts and also let the Meeting know that she had asked the Membership Committee to hold a discernment session on the meaning of membership in the fall. She highlighted that we have a wide and diverse community and that some of our committees require membership; however, no one joins the Meeting for the sole purpose of joining a committee! She then continued that committees looked for younger and more diverse friends and so it was time to discern more deeply on the concept of membership.

Betsy presented the first reading of appointments to committees for the 2018-2019 fiscal year.

It was noted that there was some confusion regarding whether First Day School and Youth Programs Committees were going to become one committee or remain separate committees working closely together. The two committees were asked to work with Nominating Committee within the next two weeks for clarity. One Friend also mentioned that the Cambridge Quaker Earthcare Witness Committee had laid itself down and Friends were asked to think about what that meant in the current world.

It was noted that several of the new proposed appointments to Trustees Committee were not members of the Meeting and that Meeting would need special approval for those individuals to serve on the Committee. Friends spoke enthusiastically regarding the gifts and enrichment

these individuals brought to committees. It was expressed that Membership Committee was fiercely protective of individuals' spiritual leadings to become members of the Meeting rather than as a response to a committee's need.

Report from Threshing Sessions

2018-047

Ian Harrington and Jennifer Hogue presented the attached summary of the discussions held by the Meeting in April 2018. Friends recognized the planning group's members and thanked them for their hard work and held all of them in the Light.

Jennifer highlighted the deep Spirit and love for the community that people put into FMC. Next steps for discernment include the Beneficial Cycle Coordinating Group and Fundraising Committee taking another look at the results through each group's specific lens, putting the information in PDF form on the community website, laying the planning group down, and asking the Clerks' Team to appoint an *ad hoc* committee to determine further steps and set concrete goals.

One Friend reflected that the discussion was about stewardship, not solely about fundraising.

Deborah Colgan requested, and was given, approval from the Meeting to bring back a list of names to serve on the new *ad hoc* committee so that individuals could get started this summer thinking about next year.

Trustees: Building and Grounds

2018-048

David White, Co-Clerk of Trustees Committee, presented the second reading of a request for additional funding for facilities work that needs to be completed over the next few years. He highlighted points from the document on Trustees Budget for Building and Grounds (see the June edition of *Minutes & Reports*) and requested that the capital funds come from the Meeting's unrestricted funds.

Friends discussed that if we approve this request from the unrestricted funds we will be drawing down the reserves that might help fund the Meeting while we discern on additional next steps; that these funds are also used to fund our deficit budget; that the funds will be drawn down over the next three to five years rather than as one large withdrawal; that the Meeting should examine all possible ways of saving money; and the question of priorities including the specific question of whether we should continue in a building that will only get older.

Friends were reminded that we as Meeting for Business in Worship can change our minds as we examine our priorities but that presently to move forward we require approval of an operating budget for Building and Grounds of \$50,000 and a capital amount of \$250,000.

Friends approved this request.

Rick Talkov, from Trustees Committee, offered to coordinate a series of conversations in the fall on the specifics of the Building and Grounds budget.

Budget for 2018-2019 Second Reading

2018-049

Jane Jackson, Treasurer, and Mark Webster, Assistant Treasurer, presented the FY 2019 budget for its second reading. Jane highlighted that, compared to the 2018 budget, the budget for 2019 reflects an increase in revenue of about \$34,000 and a decrease in expenditures of about \$15,000. The two largest areas of expense are Staff Expenses and Property Operation and Maintenance. We now employ three staff at full time and one at 5/8 time. Our building is

aging and upkeep is sometimes costly. The 2019 budget projects a deficit of about \$258,000. The net deficit excluding two Beneficial Cycle amounts is about \$95,000. About \$56,000 of this deficit represents staff expenses funded by the Beneficial Cycle. An additional \$107,000 of the deficit represents Beneficial Cycle funds set aside for in-reach, outreach, and grants which have not yet been expended.

There was a discussion concerning the line item regarding the BCCG. A Friend commented that, as historically BCCG has not spent the full amount that has been allotted to it, he would therefore recommend that the budget be modified to identify the realistic amount of money for Beneficial Cycle based on last year's budget. The Clerk of BCCG requested that, as the amount of possible funds did not impact the amount of money FMC had in the bank, more time be given for deeper discernment with a plan to bring this to MBW in the fall. One friend remarked that the money had already been approved by the Meeting several years ago and therefore would not support limiting the amount of money available for Beneficial Cycle expenditures. It was noted that it was important to hold open the door to possibilities and that this line item remained different from other line items in that this item was approved five years ago and hasn't been spent yet rather than being a specific number that had been or will be spent.

The Clerk requested that BCCG meet soon to discern on this issue and the question be reviewed in the fall.

Friends approved the 2019 budget with one individual standing aside.

FUM Budget Withholding

2018-050

Jane Jackson, Treasurer, reported on the amount that would be withheld in relation to Friends United Meeting. She noted that in 2016 Friends Meeting at Cambridge decided we were not in unity regarding financial support to Friends United Meeting because of their personnel policy that prohibits hiring of staff involved in any relationship other than heterosexual marriage. FMC decided to withhold from our annual contributions to New England Yearly Meeting the portion that would be forwarded on to FUM (FMC Minute 2016-053.)

FMC's budgeted annual contribution to NEYM is \$53,000. For this year, NEYM's budgeted contribution to FUM is \$13,075; NEYM's total budgeted expenses are \$888,994. Based on these figures, NEYM has calculated that the withholding percentage for monthly meetings who do not want their contributions to go to FUM is 1.48%. Using this formula, we would withhold \$784.40.

Trustees Committee recommends instead that we base our withheld amount on the total expenses less the income for Annual Sessions, or \$696,237, yielding a percentage of 1.88%. Using this formula, our withholding would be \$996.40.

Friends discussed why there was a difference in amount to be withheld with individuals speaking to both why we would want a different amount than suggested from NEYM, and how this number had been discerned.

Friends approved the withholding amount of \$996.40 with some Friends being clear that they were not in unity with the choice to withhold money from FUM. One Friend identified that she was standing aside from the approval of this amount.

The Meeting for Business in Worship adjourned at 3:55 pm, with Friends purposing next to gather in an Adjourned Meeting for Business in Worship on Sunday, June 24, at 1:15 pm in the Meetinghouse.

Deborah Colgan, Co-Presiding Clerk
Lili Schwan-Rosenwald, Recording Clerk

Adjourned Meeting for Business in Worship

June 24, 2018

Friends Meeting at Cambridge (FMC) gathered in an Adjourned Meeting for Business in Worship (MBW) on Sunday, June 24, at 1:15 pm. The Meeting was convened by Jan Nisenbaum, Co-Presiding Clerk, after a period of silent worship, with 41 people present. The Clerk opened the Meeting by reading a quotation from *London Yearly Meeting Faith and Practice*, 1925 & 1994:

True worship may be experienced at any time in any place—alone on the hills or in the busy daily life—we may find God, in whom we live and move and have our being. But this individual experience is not sufficient, and in a meeting held in the Spirit there is a giving and receiving between its members, one helping another with or without words. So there comes a wider vision and a deeper experience.

Announcements

2018-051

Clerks' Team: Friends were reminded that they have another six days to make a contribution to FMC before the end of the fiscal year.

Staff Reports

2018-052

Lorena Boswell, Resident Friend, and Greg Woods, Youth Ministries and Education Coordinator, presented their annual reports (see this edition of *Minutes & Reports*). Friends held them in the Light and thanked them for all their hard work.

Resident Friend Supervisory Committee Report

2018-053

Liz Moore reported for the Resident Friend Supervisory Committee, which is made up of Rick Talkov from Trustees Committee, Liz Moore from Ministry and Counsel, and Deborah Colgan from the Clerks' Team.

Liz read several sections from the feedback provided by the Meeting community which praised Lorena Boswell's service as Resident Friend. Liz then reported on the recommendation from the Resident Friend Supervisory Committee that Lorena continue as Resident Friend. Friends approved this continuation of Lorena's service as Resident Friend.

It was noted that it would be more appropriate in the future for any discussion of continuation of employment to take place without the presence of the employee in question.

Nominating Committee**2018-054**

Betsy Hewitt, from Nominating Committee, reported that First Day School and Youth Programs Committees had requested to merge into one committee. Ariel Maddocks, Clerk of First Day School Committee, read the following minute:

As both First Day School and Youth Programs Committee, we are respectfully asking the Meeting for Business, Nominating Committee, and the community to support our officially being a single committee, which is the way in which we have functioned for the last few years, ideally with a co-clerking arrangement because of the workload of this committee and to support diverse priorities, with our official joint description forthcoming.

We propose naming ourselves "Youth and Family Ministries Committee" as this aligns with the work in which our committee engages. We have logistics to work on around when we will meet and are prepared to grow and learn as a joint committee and adjust again in the future as our work evolves. We would like to go into next year as an officially joint committee but doing so means we are asking for this change to be made official by Meeting for Business and we do not have time to go through more process for this approval. We believe there is a value in settling on this clarity now and have functioned as if we were joint for long enough that we feel the Meeting is familiar with us as a functionally single committee.

Friends remarked that there was also a Marriage, Family and Relationships Committee as well as a Family Worship Planning Group and therefore requested greater clarity for both the name and the work of the committee.

The Clerk proposed that Friends approve combining these two committees with an acknowledgement that further work was needed on both the name and the work of the committee. Friends approved this proposal.

Betsy Hewitt then presented the second reading for the committee nominations for next year. Friends approved these nominations.

Betsy brought forward additional committee appointments for a first reading; these will come for a second reading at the September Meeting for Business in Worship.

It was noted that a number of committees are still missing clerks and that Meeting still does not have an Assistant Clerk.

On the instructions of the Meeting, the Recording Clerk for Friends Meeting at Cambridge cast one vote for the following officers: Deborah Colgan, Co-Presiding Clerk; Ian Harrington, Co-Presiding Clerk; David L. Myers, Recording Clerk; Jane Jackson, Treasurer; and Mark Webster, Assistant Treasurer.

Approval of Signatories**2018-055**

Jane Jackson, Treasurer, sought approval to remove Jan Nisenbaum from the authority to sign checks and otherwise act on behalf of FMC with regard to the Meeting's bank accounts with Cambridge Trust Company because her service as Co-Presiding Clerk is ending.

The list of individuals with authority to sign checks and otherwise act on behalf of FMC with regard to the Meeting's bank accounts with Cambridge Trust Company are therefore: Jane Jackson (Treasurer), Mark Webster (Assistant Treasurer), Deborah Colgan (Co-Presiding Clerk), Ian Harrington (Co-Presiding Clerk), Lorena Boswell (Resident Friend), Jo Ellen

Hillyer (Co-Clerk of Trustees Committee), and David White (Co-Clerk of Trustees Committee).

Friends approved the change.

Call to Witness on Immigration

2018-056

Otavia Propper, from Ministry and Counsel, presented the following Minute regarding the current immigration policies:

Friends Meeting at Cambridge, holding to our deepest beliefs in mercy, peace and freedom, cannot abide any U.S. policy which forcibly separates immigrants and asylum-seekers from their children. As Quakers, parents, children and Americans, we condemn this profoundly and deliberately violent course. We utterly reject the idea that God or Scripture condones such actions. Family internment camps are little better, evoking the shame of the Japanese internment camps of World War Two. We must work to reunite the nearly 2,300 parents and children already separated. International law and human decency require us to keep ports of entry open to asylum seekers who are often fleeing brutal violence in their home country. We call on President Trump, Attorney General Sessions, and Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents to acknowledge that deliberate cruelty to those seeking to become Americans makes no American safer but only sows misery, and diminishes us all, the jailer and the jailed, the liars and those lied to. Let us turn from this evil work.

Otavia listed the individuals who have been working on the Minute and Friends thanked them. She then asked that Friends give the working group permission to post the Minute on FMC's public website, send the Minute on to relevant elected officials, distribute the Minute at planned and future protests and witness and circulate it widely within the New England Yearly Meeting.

Otavia explained that she wanted the Meeting as a whole to speak up and provide witness to this work. Friends discussed some specific wording changes. One Friend noted that it was deeply important that Meeting take steps to act, not solely to ask those at the top to change their minds on this policy.

There was discussion regarding whether the language used within the Minute is unnecessarily negative and concern that it calls upon elected officials to acknowledge their own cruelty, which is unlikely to happen.

Friends approved this Minute on this topic with the request that the working group under the auspices of Ministry and Counsel do additional discernment on the language in order to prepare it for publication on the website and distribution.

Ministry and Counsel Community Guidelines

2018-057

Liz Moore, Co-Clerk of Ministry and Counsel, again brought forward the Community Guidelines with a request for approval of the document, which has been worked on since the summer of 2015. It was noted that these guidelines were subject to change and development.

Friends highlighted that calling the police when there was a person of color placed that person at significantly greater risk than when calling the police on a white person and requested that this be added into the guidelines.

Friends approved the guidelines as a Minute of Exercise, to be revisited in the future.

New England Yearly Meeting Sessions Representatives**2018-058**

FMC appointed Cornelia Parkes, Ian Harrington, and Ben Warner as official representatives to New England Yearly Meeting Sessions.

It was requested that the Clerks' Team work to find a Young Adult Friend and a teenager who plans to attend Sessions and would be interested in reporting back to FMC.

Ad Hoc Financial Priorities Committee**2018-059**

The Clerks' Team will be appointing individuals to form an *Ad Hoc* Financial Priorities Committee, which will focus on helping to make certain that Meeting has a clear understanding of our financial picture, and helping Meeting to clarify its priorities.

The Meeting for Business in Worship adjourned at 3:32 pm, with Friends purposing next to gather in a Meeting for Business in Worship on Sunday, September 9, at 1:15 pm in the Meetinghouse.

Jan Nisenbaum, Co-Presiding Clerk

Lili Schwan-Rosenwald, Recording Clerk

Nominating Report, June 2017

We on Nominating Committee, as we go about our work of reviewing our standing committees, have the challenge and reward of looking over—and after—the entire Meeting, and also the individuals who populate our committees. We encourage persons to try new committees, in general, to develop various skills, and we aspire to know community members well enough to help them realize their gifts, relative to Meeting's needs. How is the individual called to use these gifts now, in light of the Meeting's situation, and his/her situation?

This has been a peculiarly difficult year, as our committee of five lost two members in early fall, and even though a Naming Committee had been appointed by the Clerks' Team, we did not have a committee of five until mid-February.

We then found ourselves having warm (somewhat heated?) conversations about term limits and membership requirements. *These are issues that should be taken up by the entire Meeting, at some point in the very near future.*

We also had diverse opinions on the stagnation vs. stability of some committees, on accepting the self-evaluations of committees when we only check in with clerks, and pondered the possibility of having a Nominating Committee that would be much larger, and interview each individual ourselves.

We feel the need to ponder the limits of our own power and authority on the Nominating Committee.

We have tried to balance a tight structure and an expansive community. Again, these aspects of any committee need to be addressed by the entire community.

Thoughts for the fall: request a much larger Nominating Committee, if it is decided to call individual members ourselves, rather than ask committee clerks. As I mentioned, I feel unhappy about that, because it reveals a lack of trust in our clerks and a lack of respect. Maybe both clerks and individual members could be called.

And I just found this helpful: Augustine of Hippo: "We come to God by love, and not by navigation." Navigational disciplines do not replace love, but, as Douglas Steere infers, they can be a means of letting ourselves be in the stream of that graceful love, encouraging ever further yielding and communion.

Nancy Cirillo, Clerk of Nominating Committee

Preliminary Report from Sessions on Meeting Vitality and Finances

For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. Matthew 6:21

I: Framing

What sets Friends Meeting at Cambridge (FMC) apart from the other communities that we are a part of is that when we come together, we seek to be guided by our Quaker Faith and Practice rather than the common sense, conventional wisdom, and values of the wider world. This is a tremendous challenge, especially when we are considering how best to raise and spend money in our deeply materialistic and consumerist society.

We find ourselves beginning a process of taking stock: how are our current practices aligned with our values? How do we determine how much is enough? How do we jointly discern our Meeting's priorities? How do we choose where to spend our energies and our monies when there always seem to be so many good things that we want to do?

In the month of April, an *ad hoc* group composed of members of the Beneficial Cycle Coordinating Group and the *ad hoc* Long-range Financial Planning Threshing Group facilitated three 3-hour sessions with the goal of educating the members of our community about our current financial situation. We tried to ground these sessions in our Quaker testimonies and a spirit of worship, and to root the conversations in some of the concrete dilemmas we face as a meeting.

We were thrilled with the response to these meetings. Total attendance was about 140 people, and they represented a wide range of demographic groups in our Meeting community. Our hope is that, as a result of the three sessions held in April, we have:

- increased the community's level of knowledge about our current finances and some of the concerns which we are carrying;
 - increased the number of people who want to be involved in charting the Meeting's course;
 - prepared the ground for discussions of our purposes and priorities; and
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- gathered information that groups can use to discern more deeply about some of our concerns.

II: Summary of Threshing Sessions

The three sessions had some differences, but very similar formats. Each session was divided into four parts: Introduction, Review of History and Finances, Where Are We Now?, and Where Do We Go from Here?

Part One began with a welcome and a preview of the session. We created small Anchor Groups, each with a note-taker, making sure each group was composed of people with a range of experience at FMC. Each person was asked to identify aspects of FMC that they felt were alive and vital for them by writing them on sticky notes. People placed their “stickies” on a Beneficial Cycle Venn diagram in the areas of Community, Spirituality, Witness, or a combination. Participants then shared responses and commented on the patterns noted within each Anchor Group.

Part Two included a review of Meeting history and dynamics that led to the creation of the Beneficial Cycle experiment and our current situation. We asked participants to share their stories about the following:

- Deaths of wealthy donors who helped us “meet” our budgets for decades;
- Disagreement about what to do with large bequests;
- Consistently outspending our income;
- Decrease in numbers of members and attenders, concern about numbers of families, children and youth active in the Meeting;
- Increased reliance on paid staff vs. volunteers; and
- Embarking on Beneficial Cycle experiment to address these concerns.

We discussed how, five years into the Beneficial Cycle experiment, our basic dynamics are the same and we find ourselves revisiting longstanding issues. However, because of planned Beneficial Cycle expenditures, the gap between income and expenditure has widened.

We then presented, in graph form, a summary of FMC’s current income and expenses. The graph made clear that most of the operating budget goes toward staff salaries and the costs of building and grounds maintenance and operations. It also showed how most Beneficial Cycle spending has been used to increase our staffing. The chart projected our current level of income and spending out a few years to illustrate how staying on our current path will deplete our substantial reserves.

In **Part Three**, Where Are We Now?, we re-grouped people to spend time in discernment about a particular dilemma that the meeting is currently facing. The dilemmas were not meant to represent all of the concerns or challenges in the Meeting, but to help people begin to look at concrete, specific examples of where our values and our spending may be in conflict. Each group was provided some basic information about the dilemma and was asked to consider a set of queries while keeping in mind our Quaker testimonies. Comments were written on large sheets of paper covering the tables. The dilemmas (which overlapped considerably) included:

- Maintaining our Space for Worship and Community Activities;
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- Supporting Families by Providing Child Care: What is the right approach?;
- Youth Programs: Investing in outreach;
- Five Longfellow Park: Should we stay or should we go?;
- Witness: Is our treasure where our heart is?;
- Balanced Budget: Do we raise our income, reduce our expenses, or both?;
- Staffing vs. Volunteerism: How much is enough when it comes to Meeting work?; and
- Beneficial Cycle Experiment: What does it take to increase our vitality?

Participants returned to their Anchor Groups to share about their experiences in the Dilemma Discussion Groups.

The final part of the day, **Part Four**, consisted of a worship-sharing period held in the whole group with the focus “Where do we go from here?”

Many participants filled out an Individual Threshing Sheet which asked several questions about their reaction to the session. We have typed up these responses anonymously. We have also recorded responses from sticky notes and those written on table top sheets. We collected notes from all of the wonderful note-takers who listened carefully to their anchor group members. These collected notes amount to dozens of pages of responses. Our group has begun to color-code many of the comments and organize them to make them more useful. We can make this material available to any group that feels it would be helpful.

III: General Themes

We gathered a tremendous amount of information from these sessions about what draws people to FMC, what people are wondering, worried about, interested in, and some of their ideas for next steps. We have not yet done a complete analysis of the information from the sessions, but as we’ve read notes from the anchor groups, the dilemma groups, and individual reflections, we’ve seen a few themes arise:

- Taken as a whole, the turnout for the threshing sessions and the responses of participants amounted to a groundswell of love and concern for the Meeting. Participants were willing to spend three hours on a Saturday or Sunday discussing the future of the Meeting and expressed a desire for more conversation and more ways to have conversations about important issues for our community centered around values. This response gives us great hope for finding our way forward. It also suggests to us a momentum that we don’t want to lose.
- The wide range of opinions about next steps expressed at these meetings suggests that we have a long process of discernment ahead, and also that there is energy for re-visioning what FMC can be.
- One area in which we heard widespread agreement was that FMC shouldn’t spend more money than we bring in each year.
- We heard from our community that there is a real lack of knowledge about FMC business and finances, and a need for more ways to get information about the workings of FMC beyond Meeting for Business.
- We heard a great desire to care for one another and invest time, energy, and money to do so.

- Most attendees identified aspects of FMC that are from the spiritual and community (as opposed to witness) spheres as being the most important and vibrant for them.
- We heard a concern that we be more visible in the world.

IV: Financial Themes

These threshing sessions came about in large part because of a concern for our Meeting's financial health. For that reason, we've focused our initial analysis on financial themes that arose. We believe that there is more to be learned from the data, but we simply haven't had time to process all of it yet. As we read people's comments about money and finances, we found that most could be grouped into the following five categories: Meeting Dynamics, Spirit, Responsibility, Fundraising, and Vision & Priorities.

Vision & Priorities: A number of Friends felt that we could not make good financial decisions until we had come to some unity as a Meeting about our vision and our priorities. Others were excited to consider big, bold, out-of-the-box possibilities for our Meeting's future.

- "I feel people will support it if they feel it is wonderful, important, necessary. How do we make sure this meeting is wonderful and important?"
- "We need to consider what giving is about."
- "The conversations we've had today have started out being about money, but they make no sense without considering what we are called to do and to be."
- "Context is too small—"think outside the box"—more options needed."
- "I heard a great idea: Safe injection facility—here! It would give us a meaningful community service and draw people in and make use of the space in a beautiful way."
- "What can we do to the building to make it serve better? More housing? More suitable for events? Easier sanctuary?"
- "We could create a Quaker Center for the region, with high-tech capacity."

Meeting Dynamics: We heard many comments about a history of difficult dynamics when we talk about money at FMC. Comments we heard included:

- "I don't go to business meeting when the budget is being discussed. I don't like to talk about money; it's boring; it makes me feel uncomfortable."
 - "Many friends don't seem to understand the specific expenses of running this building."
 - "We're foggy. . . We don't collect numbers of how many people come and why. We would like to grow but haven't been specific about setting goals for how to support growth."
 - "There is a tension between heart-centered and financially-conscious Friends who sometimes are just plain not nice to one another; not respectful when discussing expenditures."
 - "Touchiness surrounding money. Historical discomfort stemming from financial prosperity versus Quaker value of simplicity."
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Spirit: A number of people commented on the tension between attention to Spirit and fiscal responsibility:

- “Putting faith and guidance by Spirit into discernment about finances is a challenge—when we talk about money, our outlook tends to become secular.”
- “The shift of mind to abundance is very spiritual. I see more now that my beliefs limit what I can do.”
- “We need to be both spiritual and pragmatic: Pray to Allah AND tether your camel.”

Responsibility: A comment that we heard many times was that a budget out of balance goes against our Quaker values. Many participants were unaware that Meeting has financial concerns and others were shocked at the low level of contributions from members and attenders.

- “I learned today that about half the people associated with our meeting don’t contribute financially. . . The statistic is remarkable.”
- “Do we understand that we must increase income and lower costs?”
- “I think we can raise more money or spend less, but moderation and integrity should require that we balance our budget and keep it sustainable.”

Fundraising: Many participants agreed that we need to increase our giving and had ideas and suggestions for fundraising—both in terms of asking individuals to donate more and doing focused fundraising—like a capital campaign. We heard many fewer suggestions about how we might cut costs. All of the data and suggestions we gathered related to fundraising will be shared with the Fundraising Committee. We heard comments that the Fundraising Committee needs to be more active and visible in the Meeting and more fully supported by the Meeting. This is a small sampling of the comments and suggestions:

- “FMC needs to get better at actually asking for contributions—we need to be clearer that there is indeed a need!”
- “It is a challenge to successfully ask for money. People do like to know where their money will go.”
- “What can members realistically be asked to contribute on a monthly basis?”
- “We don’t have a plan for increased fundraising. No one wants to cut staff so the only option is increasing money.”
- “How much would each member have to pay if we were to meet our budget? Start there.”
- Some suggestions:
 - Tithing;
 - Sharing space with other faith groups;
 - Capital fundraising campaign to improve building;
 - Make costs clearer to Meeting members—encourage weekly giving;
 - Charge money for activities and events at FMC rather than have them be free;

- Make it easier for people to give money, especially scheduled regular donations; and
- Need guidance on levels of contribution.

V: Summary and Suggestions

Summary of Finance-Related Feedback

1. We need to clarify our priorities;
2. We need to do more to help people understand the finances of the Meeting;
3. We need to put more of a focus on fundraising;
4. We need to work on cultural changes that will help us communicate better and be more Spirit-led; and
5. We need to develop a concrete and realistic plan for responsible spending.

Ongoing work:

1. The BCCG will be examining session data through a Beneficial Cycle lens, and will bring a report and recommendations to the Meeting in the fall.
2. We will be making the data from the sessions available to the Meeting in a format accessible by everyone.

Suggestions:

The three sessions we facilitated in April represent just the beginning of a discernment process. At the same time, we feel the work of this particular planning group is complete and we should be laid down. Based on what we heard during the sessions, we offer the following suggestions in hopes that they might be helpful in determining what steps to take next:

- We suggest that the Fundraising Committee review the many ideas, questions, concerns, and suggestions that people have shared about raising money and that they prepare a proposal for expanded fundraising efforts for consideration early in the fall.
 - There is no standing committee which seems to be in position to lead the priority discernment or financial education efforts, so we urge the Presiding Clerks to set up an *ad hoc* Financial Priorities Group to handle those tasks. We sense there is a danger of losing the momentum towards discernment about FMC's future if we don't provide opportunities for information-sharing and discussion over the summer, so we urge this group to plan events in July and August (possibly as Sunday evening potlucks or during the Simple Lunch and/or Forum time slots) and prepare a proposal for leading FMC through this process for consideration early in the fall. (We have brainstormed some more specific ideas that we would be happy to share with this group once it is formed.)
 - We need to consider alternative ways to provide information to the FMC community so that we can make corporate decisions with broad participation. We also need to consider how to make the process more welcoming and Spirit-led. To whom does this responsibility fall?
 - Although it is too late in the process to substantially change the Fiscal Year 2019 operating budget, it may be helpful to establish a goal for reducing the deficit in the
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Fiscal Year 2020 operating budget and begin working toward that goal next fall (e.g. reduce deficit by 50%).

Respectfully submitted by: Lorena Boswell, Minga Claggett-Borne, Elizabeth Dyer, Ian Harrington, Jennifer Hogue, Arthur Klipfel, David L Myers, Barbara Scott Nelson, and Maria West

2018 Report from the Youth Ministries and Education Coordinator, Greg Woods

Since starting February 1, it has been a busy winter and spring. It has been a joy. I have loved getting to know the Meeting, especially all of the children, the youth, and their families. I also inherited a great staff and an amazing group of volunteers who all work hard at providing a safe learning atmosphere for all of the children here at the Meeting. I feel extremely lucky to have everyone helping to run the youth programs here at the Meeting.

By my calculations, since I have arrived, our programs have included 51 youth, the youngest being a couple months old all the way up to 18 years old. About a quarter of the youth are people of color, making the youth program a quite diverse program, given the meeting demographics as a whole. Currently, we average about 15 youth per Sunday.

Our programs have ranged from the weekly First Day School lessons and the Teen Worship held every other week to the monthly Family Worship to having a sizable presence (9) at the All Meeting Retreat in March and the Family Retreat held Memorial Day weekend, which included 15 people in all. I have also been working on scheduling at least monthly gatherings of our Youth Group, which is made up of our Junior High and Teen Worship participants. Also, I have become active with the Family Worship Planning Group in order to better integrate Family Worship into what First Day School (FDS) is doing throughout the year.

On the staffing front, we said good-bye to our trusted and much-beloved Nursery Coordinator of two years, Pearl Kerber, last week and at the same time we welcomed Eliza Myers into the position, with the new title of Nursery Lead Teacher. Eliza grew up in this meeting and is excited to be in this position. This title better reflects the actual position.

Volunteer-wise, I have been working on getting more adults screened to help with events and subbing for our amazing FDS and Teen Worship teachers. Four new adults have been screened so far and several more are currently in the process of getting screened. I am especially focused on getting more young adults screened to work with our youth.

So far during my time here, I have been trying to just see how things have run in the past without making too many changes. Now that it is summer, I am looking forward to exploring with Lorena and others about changes for the future.

The main questions I am looking at this summer and beyond are:

- How do we update the curriculum to reflect the interconnectedness of witness/service with the understanding of Quaker history and faith formation of our youth?
 - How do we retain and re-engage our youth at all age levels?
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- How do we reach out in a holistic way to families and youth within the Boston area who are searching for a faith community like ours?
- How do we better integrate our youth and families into the life of the Meeting?
- How can we build a stronger community among the youth and families?

Lastly, although I was excited for this position, the transition for Jenn, Margaret Rae, and me from North Carolina to Boston was hard. We left behind a great community that supported us through multiple job transitions and Margaret Rae's birth. Yet, I feel lucky that we have been greeted so warmly by this community. This has helped to make the transition as smooth as possible. Even though we are nearing our five-month anniversary of moving here, we already feel very connected to this community. Thank you all for the support!

Annual Report of the Resident Friend, Lorena Boswell, June 24, 2018

"Mind that which is eternal, which gathers your hearts together up to the Lord, and lets you see that ye are written in one another's heart.

~ George Fox, 1653, Epistle #24 (Works 7:31), from Rex Ambler's *Truth of the Heart*, p. 58 (Revised Edition)

After my first nine months with you all here at Friends Meeting at Cambridge, I find you are written on my heart as I believe I am on yours. We have been getting to know one another. We have been loving each other, struggling together, and occasionally stepping on each other's toes as we discover the contours of this work you've called me here to do with you. We've been asking questions, naming realities, seeking answers, nurturing, celebrating, and lifting up.

As I do this work, I practice drawing my focus to that which is eternal. When I am in committee meetings, social hour, and any other part of this large community, I endeavor to speak from the awareness of the eternal and invite others in. When I outrun my guide, I am grateful you are there endeavoring to focus on the eternal as well and so you help me remember to always turn towards Spirit.

I find a tension in living and working in the center of your Meeting and community. Using the word "your" is just one example of this tension. I am both now a part of the fabric of FMC and outside of it. I hold this paradox as a gift and a challenge.

So I stand in the dynamic center in which I am both a part and not a part of FMC. I am a guest, here to travel with you all for a while. So both in this report and in my work, I sometimes say "we" and sometimes "you." Please know this is my endeavor to remember that while we are written on each other's hearts, ultimately this is your Meeting and the decisions about how to proceed are yours. I am honored to be accompanying you.

I have decided to report on my work of this past nine months in relationship to my job description. Below I've included parts of my job description in italics directly followed with the work I've done specific to each section.

(From the Resident Friend Job Description) Expectations: *FMC sees our Resident Friend as having responsibility for caring about and facilitating the functioning of the whole Meeting. . . . With*

appropriate consultation, the Resident Friend will primarily attend to the administrative needs of the meeting including staff supervision, fiscal oversight, programmatic activities, communication, spiritual education, pastoral care and outreach. Some examples of our expectations follow.

What I love about Quakerism is that, when we are faithful, we live in the questions and allow this process to guide us. Here at FMC, I find that we are still naming the significant changes that accompany the fairly recent change in position title from “Friend in Residence” to “Resident Friend.” While my job description has some specifics which I will address below, I was also hired with the understanding that I may be of some help in clarifying the role.

Implicit in the shift from Friend in Residence to Resident Friend, I believe, is the shift in emphasis from nurturing individuals to nurturing community. While the phrase in my job description: “FMC sees our Resident Friend as having responsibility for caring about and facilitating the functioning of the whole meeting” seems on the surface large and amorphous; when I listen deeply, I find the next steps and focus have easily arisen. This is not a matter of focusing on the separate details of each effort coming out of FMC, which would be overwhelming, but it is instead a sensing of the patterns arising in the whole.

One large pattern centers around your Beneficial Cycle experiment with its focused exploration of new ways of revitalizing FMC. This is part of what attracted me to the position during the interview process. This year, working with the Beneficial Coordinating Group, as well as partnering with the *ad hoc* group to create and facilitate the threshing sessions on the future of the Meeting, has been a significant focus of my work. You have recognized the need for change and have found ways to allow Spirit to guide and to work through you on changing the fabric of your Meeting. As change often is, this is a slow and ongoing process. I am excited to be part of these conversations.

As I learn how to accompany you in this exciting journey of self-reflection and change, I ask myself how to support and facilitate the functioning of such a large Meeting with so many moving parts and points of view. Part of my challenge has been to lovingly present my outside perspective and experiences. How do I work from and towards the center?

Sometimes I think of my role as a form of knitting or weaving: helping FMC create a stronger fabric of community. Both the administrative details and the big-picture, systemic thinking are a part of this weaving.

Staff: *Supervise all staff on a day-to-day basis and lead the process of annual staff evaluation . . . with ongoing consultation with appropriate FMC committees and the Co-Presiding Clerks . . . make all decisions regarding hiring, continuation, and termination of principal staff.*

I’ve been working closely with each of our core staff members: Amy Mercure, Office Manager; Greg Woods, Youth Ministries and Education Coordinator; and David Dunphy, Facilities Manager. With each one, I’ve established rapport, developed systems of communication and supervision, established and reviewed goals, and offered support and constructive feedback when needed. Our team is excellent and I thoroughly enjoy working with each one of them and their unique gifts. Similarly, for most of the year I worked with Gail Rogers as the Interim Youth Ministries and Education Coordinator. Gail and I had the particularly unique challenge of being new to our positions at the same time. This motivated me to take the time to get to know First Day School and Youth Programming teachers and committee members. In this way I was better able to support Gail in her efforts to hold the programming together until we could hire a person permanently. I was also then prepared to train and orient Greg when he arrived. I am very

grateful to Gail and everyone in FDS/Youth Programs who help both of us with the sometimes rocky transition period.

While Amy, David, Greg and myself I have become a well-functioning team, even in this there is an awareness that we are all serving the Meeting and your needs. As a large and diverse Meeting, these needs are not always in unity and so not always easy for staff including myself to navigate. When I interviewed I was told that a challenge for staff is the feeling that they have 200 bosses. For the many decades before my immediate predecessor was hired, FMC had no centralized supervisor. You all wisely envisioned the increased stability of staffing that is created with the relatively new role of the Resident Friend position. Patterns take time to shift.

A priority for me has been to work with each core staff member to ensure that they know when to come to me if the work load and or community expectations are too much or unclear. In these moments we've clarified the way forward. At this point, this is not a frequent occurrence. You also have been making the shift, and we as staff appreciate it.

While the Resident Friend position brings a unified stability to staffing dynamics, ultimately, I cannot and do not do this in isolation. The process of hiring our new Youth Minister for example, was one in which the search committee labored with each other and Spirit to come to unity both about what they (and we) were looking for. It was an honor to work closely with them as they developed interview questions and conducted all of the details of a national search, including flying in two finalists. We hired the fabulous Greg Woods, who is faithfully following a clear leading to the work of youth ministry.

In addition to supervising our core staff, I work with our Facilities Manager in the supervision of our Center Residents and with our Youth Ministries and Education Coordinator in the scheduling and supervision of our nursery and child care workers. I operate in the background while they both very competently handle the day to day of this work.

Other staffing changes this year have included hiring Eliza Myers as the new Nursery Lead Teacher and our current search for two new Center Residents who will start by the fall. Additionally, utilizing Beneficial Cycle funds, we've hired Miranda Henne as a one-year Young Adult Friends Coordinator, whom I supervise, and Diana Lopez as a temporary Pastoral Care Coordinator, whom I do not supervise. All of this is part of the fabric of what I hold both prayerfully and administratively. There are a lot of moving parts to ensuring staffing runs well here. I do not do it alone. The Personnel Committee, Facilities Committee, First Day School and Youth Programs Committees, Office Operations Committee, Resident Friend Supervisory Committee, as well as our Treasurer and you as a corporate decision making body in Meeting for Business, all support and guide me in the process. I feel blessed to have such wonderful people to work with, both as my staff and as a community supporting me in this work.

Meeting Committees:

- *Regularly attend Ministry & Counsel and committees that have direct relationship with staff. . . . Check-in periodically with committee clerks . . . and occasionally attend FMC committees and groups particularly those that may need assistance with focus and responsibility.*
- *. . . know what each committee and group is doing, identify overlap in responsibilities or potential conflicts and identify when something important is not working as intended or is getting lost in the shuffle.*

In addition to supervising staff, a significant portion of my time is spent on the life and work of committees. I have gained a solid and interconnected sense of FMC's inner workings by

consistently attending 13 committees and groups (Ministry and Counsel, Trustees, Facilities, First Day School and Youth Programs, Office Operations, Personnel, Beneficial Cycle Coordinating Group, the *Ad Hoc* Planning Group for the Threshing Sessions on the Future of the Meeting, Communications Umbrella Group, Child Abuse Response Committee and the Rapid Response Committee, All Committee Clerks, the Clerks' Team planning, and of course Meeting for Business). I've come to realize that while there is much of FMC's history and context that I'm sometimes missing, my vantage point of attending many different committee meetings provides me with unique insights and perspectives. I endeavor to share these when and where it feels appropriate. In this way, I feel I am often one of many threads that help keep the work of the different committees more connected.

Communication among disparate parts of the Meeting is sometimes challenging. A question that seems to be tripped over during committee work is: Who else needs to be consulted in our decision-making process? This is something I find myself still learning to ask. I believe many of the challenges we face are about the size of this Meeting . . . how does everyone have a sense of the whole?

The Newsletter is simultaneously a good way to help others have a sense of the whole, to build community, and to invite newcomers further into the life of the Meeting. For these reasons, I've worked closely with Amy, our Office Manager, to encourage content for the newsletter. She in turn works closely with the Publications Group as well as the Communications Umbrella Group. In knowing what themes and questions are percolating in the life of the meeting, I've written several articles this year and have also encouraged others to do so. I've asked Amy to check in with the organizers of events and encourage Newsletter submissions. I've also started taking photos for the Newsletter. It is my desire to help you all know and celebrate each other and the vibrant and generous life of the Meeting you are a part of.

In having a sense of the whole, I have also had the opportunity to nurture connections across groups. Families with children, for example, know each other, but I've heard complaints on both sides that there is a divide between the First Day School community and the larger community. The same can easily be said for Young Adult Friends. I find myself having conversations with committees about how to develop systemic ways for folks to get to know each other outside of their smaller groups. For example, First Day School Committee is excited to work with Greg Woods and Ministry and Counsel to experiment with systemic ways for the Meeting to get to know our children and First Day School Programs. We'll be working on this in the fall.

I have provided focused attention and support to four committees this year that struggled with being stretched too thin to easily accomplish the work they were tasked to do. With Naming, Nominating, Fellowship and Outreach, and Young Adult Friends, I have been able to respond to needs in the moment, such as when Nominating unexpectedly and unavoidably had several members leave within a short period, including a co-clerk. I've been able to step in quickly and provide what I've been told was needed energy and support. I hope to be able to provide some extra support to Fundraising Committee next year, as FMC is asking them to increase the Meeting's efforts in that area. I'm also wondering about supporting clerks in the challenging role of leadership.

Pastoral Care: *Work with the responsible committee to coordinate . . . responding to community needs. The Resident Friend will ideally provide some pastoral care because there will be times when seasoned response is immediately needed.*

My predecessor, Sharon Frame, mentioned to me that she spent a good deal of her time providing pastoral care for FMC members with health crises. The formation of Communities of

Hope was an effort to relieve the pastoral care responsibilities that can be quite time-consuming for the Resident Friend. In this way, I am now more free to work on nurturing FMC's multi-faceted community.

That said, I have provided pastoral care in many ways. The Rapid Response Committee, of which I am a part, helped FMC navigate a particularly challenging situation last fall and winter. Much of my role in this process was pastoral care. Additionally, many times, I have been the first person to listen to a member or attender in crisis and have helped refer them to the appropriate support/resources. Recently I accompanied a member in the ambulance to the Emergency Room and stayed with her until her family could take over. In smaller ways I'm providing pastoral care to many Friends as you process your committee work and talk to me about your lives. This is all part of the weaving and the love in minding the eternal.

Follow Through: *Be mindful of key activities the Meeting has undertaken and when something significant is not progressing the Resident Friend will sensitively and dependably inquire about the work and will assist in finding solutions [to problems] that may be impeding completion of the task.*

FMC is in the middle of a lot of conversations about the future of the meeting and what kind of community you are and want to become. With the planning of April's threshing sessions, I felt my partnership with you all deepen. After nine months of working with you, I have a better framework in which to faithfully listen and nurture the threads of conversations that are happening.

There are many questions I hear you wrestling with. What are FMC's priorities? What sort of community do you envision growing into? What is God/Spirit asking of FMC? What structures no longer serve? How do we change them? How do we honor the wisdom of those who have been here for decades while welcoming in and nurturing the next generations? How do we fiscally manage FMC's resources?

I see part of my role as helping us keep the big picture questions in mind as we do the daily and monthly work of the Meeting. It's easy for time and energy to be consumed by the myriad of details of running this large and complex Meeting. I'm committed to working beside you in helping you make the changes you are pushing for. I hope to assist you in your continued shift from being reactive to proactive, and as your ideas continue to develop and deepen.

Paradoxically, my work also includes helping to ensure that not only the big picture questions but also the small necessary details do not get dropped in the busy-ness of it all. Thomas Gates urges us to strive to live in the "paradox at the dynamic center of Quakerism." In broad terms, it seems to me that FMC is seeking to find the balance of paradox and the faith that Spirit/God is alive and inviting us all individually and organizationally into deeper transformation.

There is already much in process at FMC for the coming year that I look forward to working on with you. An *ad hoc* group is forming to design next steps for discerning the future of the Meeting, Beneficial Cycle Coordinating Group is working on their five-year review, and Nominating Committee has questions for the Meeting as a whole. Additionally, we will be reorganizing how we present ourselves on our bulletin boards, the Communications Umbrella Group is meeting in August to plan concerted outreach efforts for September, and Greg Woods and First Day School Committee are beginning to grapple with revitalizing our programming. These are all projects to which I intend to provide support. Mostly though, and throughout all of this, I remind myself to turn to the Spirit for guidance. As Isaac Pennington urges:

Give over thine own willing, give over thine own running, give over thine own desiring to know or be anything, and sink down to the seed which God sows in thy heart and let that be in thee, and grow in

thee, and breathe in thee, and act in thee, and thou shalt find by sweet experience that the Lord knows that, and loves and owns that, and will lead it to the inheritance of life, which is God's portion.

~Isaac Pennington, 1681, from "Some Directions to the Panting Soul," in Works, Volume 2.

5 Longfellow Park
Cambridge, MA 02138-4816
www.FMCQuaker.org

Deborah Colgan and Ian Harrington
Co-Clerks
clerk@FMCQuaker.org
617-876-6883

Lorena Boswell, Resident Friend
resident@FMCQuaker.org
617-876-1868

Amy Mercure, Office Manager
office@FMCQuaker.org
617-876-6883

Greg Woods, Youth Ministries and
Education Coordinator
youthministries@FMCQuaker.org
413-251-6512

David Dunphy, Facilities Manager
facilities@FMCQuaker.org
617-354-3383

Diana Lopez, Pastoral Care Coordinator
pastoralcare@FMCQuaker.org
617-312-8304

Miranda Henne, YAF Coordinator
yafcoordinator@fmcquaker.org
To receive newsletter write to:
office2@FMCQuaker.org

Friends Meeting at Cambridge

Return Service Requested

Meetings for Worship at FMC

5 Longfellow Park, Cambridge

Sundays 10:30 am
5:00 pm
Wednesdays 8:30 am to 10 am

South Shore Preparative Meeting

Sundays 10:00 am
For location, call Joanne Heffernan
781-337-9337

Worship Group at Brookhaven

1010 Waltham Street, Lexington
Sundays 10:30 am
Elisabeth Cotten
781-862-7578

Other Nearby Worship Opportunities

Acton Friends Meeting,

Contact Clerk, acton@neym.org

Amesbury Monthly Meeting, 120 Friend St., Amesbury

Sundays 10:00 am

Beacon Hill Friends Meeting, 6 Chestnut St., Boston

Sundays 10:30 am

Cambridge Friends School, 5 Cadbury Rd., Cambridge

not during July and August

Framingham Friends Meeting, 841 Edmands Rd., Framingham

Sundays 10:00 am

Fresh Pond Monthly Meeting, CFS Cambridge

Sundays 10:00 am

Lawrence Monthly Meeting, 15 Forest St., Methuen

Sundays 6:30 pm

Nashoba Worship Group, nashobaquakers@gmail.com

Sundays 10:30 am

North Shore Monthly Meeting, 74 Hart St., Beverly Farms

Sundays 10:00 am

Wellesley Friends Meeting, 26 Benvenue St., Wellesley

Sundays 10:30 am