



MONADNOCK QUAKER MEETING NEWSLETTER

Third Month, 2026

CALENDAR		
Sundays	10:30 AM	Meeting for Worship; Sundays in person or on Zoom
March 15	1:00 PM +/-	Meeting for Business* follows a potluck meal.
March 22	12:15 PM	2 nd Hour; Friends Committee on National Legislation, Barbara Jo Kingsley
March 29	12:15 PM	2 nd Hour; American Friends Service Committee, Nan Beiter (<i>What is AFSC etc.</i>)
April 2	4:00 PM	Quaker Readers
April 5	9:45 PM	Singing before Meeting
April 5		Easter 2 nd Hour Intergenerational egg hunt and games
April 12	12:15 PM	Spiritual Journey, Patti Muldoon
April 19	1:00 PM +/-	Potluck meal precedes Meeting for Business.
April 26		(Open)
May 1-3	9:45 PM	Silent Retreat, Meeting House (begins Friday w/ a potluck meal @ 6:30)
May 3	12:15 PM	Singing before Meeting
May 3	4:00 PM	Conflict as a Learning Opportunity, facilitated by Jackie Stillwell **
May 7		Quaker Readers
		* Send agenda items to Clerk Ed Kerman, ekerman@phoenixfarm.org
		**Please let Jackie Stillwell if you would like to present a second hour or if there's a topic you would like to know more about or discuss.



Quaker Readers Book List March 2026 to December 2026

Quaker Readers meets at 4 pm on the first Thursday of the month, either on zoom, in person, or a hybrid of the two. A decision will be made on the day before as to the format and location, and sent to the MQM email list. The group is coordinated by Denise Ginzler. If you have questions please contact Denise at 603-930-5313 or <dginzler@mindspring.com>. All are welcome either as regulars or occasional drop-ins.

Quaker Readers 2026 book list

April 2, 2026

Author visit: Betsy Small will join us!

Before: a story of discovery and loss in Sierra Leone by Betsy Small, 193 p., 2025. A rare portrait of everyday people, with particular focus on the lives of women and girls, before the brutal war of 1991 tore the country apart. Small's account of immersion in another world as she witnessed injustice and was welcomed as a friend.

Suggested by Denise Ginzler

May 5, 2026

Swell a sailing surfer's voyage of awakening by Liz Clark, 320 p., 2018

In 2006, Liz Clark decided to follow the path that surfing, sailing and love of the ocean had presented to her. Embarking on an adventure that most only dream of taking, she set sail from

Santa Barbara, solo, headed to the South Pacific. Nine years later she is still following her path in search of surf and self and the beauty and inspiration that lies beyond the beaten path.

Suggested by Sheila Garrett

June 4, 2026

Grendel: by John Gardner, 152 p., 1972

Grendel is a 1971 novel by the American author John Gardner. It is a retelling of part of the Old English poem Beowulf from the perspective of the antagonist, Grendel. In the novel, Grendel is portrayed as an antihero. The novel deals with finding meaning in the world, the power of literature and myth, and the nature of good and evil.

Suggested by Michael Batinski

July 2, 2026

The Inheritance of Loss: by Kiran Desai, 336 p., 2006

Suggested by Nan Beiter

August 6, 2026

When Women Were Dragons: by Kelly Barnhill, 336 p., 2022.

Suggested by Denise Ginzler

September 3, 2026

Healing the Heart of Democracy: by Parker Palmer, 236 p., 2011

Suggested by Michael Batinski

October 1, 2026

Nothing More of This Land: Community, Power and the Search for Indigenous Identity

By Joseph Lee, 256 p, 2025

Suggested by Sheila Garrett and Ruth Zwirner

November 5, 2026

A Tender Time: Quaker Voices on the End of Life by Baltimore Yearly Meeting,

By Patricia M. Nesbitt and Kristin Camitta Zimet, 212 p., 2024

Suggested by Patti Muldoon

December 3, 2026

Becoming Madam Secretary: by Stephanie Dray, 528 p. 2024

Suggested by Sheila Garrett

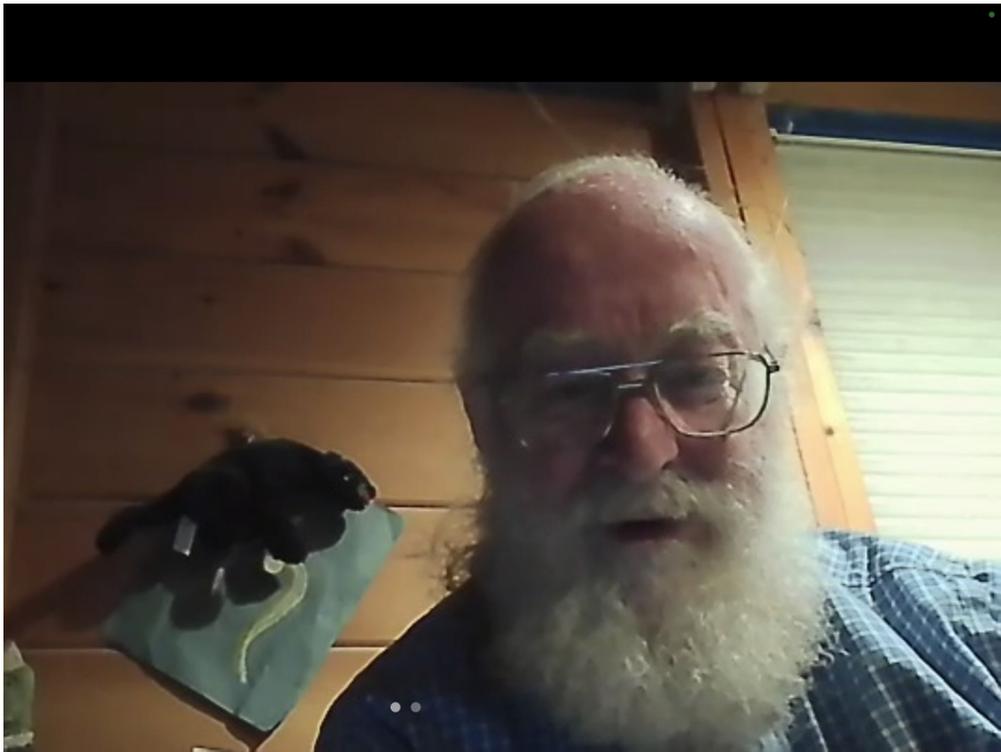


"I do not believe that just because you're opposed to abortion, that that makes you pro-life. In fact, I think in many cases, your morality is deeply lacking if all you want is a child born but not a child fed, not a child educated, not a child housed. And why would I think that you don't? Because you don't want any tax money to go there. That's not pro-life. That's pro-birth. We need a much broader conversation on what the morality of pro-life is."

Sister Joan Chittister, Benedictine nun.



Photo: Judy Brophy



Screen shot: Judy Brophy

Monadnock Business Meeting 1/18/26

26-01 Present: Jim Giddings, Betsy, Eleanor, Peter, Denise Ginsler, Jackie, Travis, Karen Da Costa (serving as substitute recording clerk for this meeting), Ed Kerman, (clerk)
Via Zoom: Judy Brophy

26-02 Friends settled in with worship. Ed read from Balm of Gilead

26-03 Report from M&C: Eleanor shared the report (emailed from Judy and included below) Karen finished reading.
Travis raised concerns about Kate's minute and assuring it goes to quarter in time to get forwarded and included at the NEYM Memorial meeting in the summer.
The next M&C committee meeting is Feb 4, 2026.
The report was accepted

Denise read the draft of Kate's memorial minute.(Denise emailed to Megan) and opened for edits or additions from all present. Ed requested that edits or additions be shared with Denise or members of Ministry and Council in the next couple weeks so that a final version can be brought to the Feb business meeting.

26-04 Announcements

Future agenda item mentioned was Jackie sharing from her recent travels. She indicated she expects to be ready next month.

26-05 Close with worship.

Attachments shared during Business Meeting:

January 7, 2026 Meeting of Ministry and Counsel
Report to January Business Meeting

Present: Judy Brophy, Ada Kerman, Karen Dacosta, Ed Kerman, Michael Batinski, Megan Jensen On zoom

Regrets : Eleanor Cappa

Nominating Committee

The committee continues to search for a new member of the Nominating Committee.

Zoom

We've been informed that the meeting's PC issued a dire sounding error message suggesting that the hard drive was toast. We discussed whether it was to the benefit of the meeting to continue having access to Zoom for Meeting for Worship and Business meeting. The feeling was that it was worth keeping. Should we wait till it dies or look for a new hard drive or a new computer? Karen will pursue this with Doug Armstrong from the House and Grounds Committee concerning what investment is needed to keep the system going.

State of Society

Ed read an email from the Yearly Meeting office that suggests ways to open discussions for a State of Society report. It is due to the Quarter and the yearly meeting office in May/June. We scheduled a Second Hour on the second Sunday of February, Feb 8, to discuss our thoughts. Karen DaCosta will facilitate the meeting. Judy Brophy will take notes. If needed we will continue the discussion on March 8.



Monadnock Quaker Monthly Business Meeting

February 15, 2026

26-06 Friends gathered at 1:00 for a Meeting for Business at the Meetinghouse, with the option to join virtually over Zoom. Friends in attendance were: Eleanor Cappa, Judy Brophy, Jackie Stillwell, Jim Giddings, Patti Muldoon, Michael Batinski, Heather Mundahl, Denise Ginzler, Pat ----, Travis Belcher, Anitra Sorensen, Megan Jensen (Recording Clerk), and Ed Kerman (Presiding Clerk).

26-07 Friends opened with worship.

*There is nothing I can give you which you need and haven't got
But there is much that you can take for your own.*

Take heaven, take peace and joy.

Take peace and joy and heaven.

*So I greet you with the prayer that for you now and ever more,
The day breaks joyous and the shadows flee away.*

Take joy, take heavenly peace,

Take peace and joy and heaven.

26-08 Ministry and Counsel

Friends accepted a report from Ministry and Counsel, as presented by Eleanor Cappa:

Report to March Business Meeting

Ministry and Counsel committee met February 4.

Present (on Zoom): Judy Brophy, Ada Kerman, Karen Dacosta, Ed Kerman, Michael Batinski, Eleanor Cappa.

Regrets: Megan Jensen

Nominating Committee - **Action Item**

We recommend Jackie Stillwell for Nominating committee.

Computers and Zoom

Karen has talked with Doug Armstrong from the House and Grounds Committee regarding the health of our meetinghouse computer. Doug says it will probably last for a while so a decision on its replacement is not pressing. Doug is working to see if the microphone/video device that Vassalboro meeting gave us would be useful.

State of Society

We approved Jackie Stillwell offering another meeting to discuss the State of Society at her home. We firmed up plans for the second hour on Feb 8

Memorial Minute for Kate Kerman - **Action Item**

Denise Ginzler will bring forward the memorial minute for Kate Kerman. This minute was read during the January business meeting and circulated for edits this month. We request approval of the minute. After approval it will be sent to Northwest Quarter.

Our next meeting will be Wednesday, March 4 at 7pm

26-09 Nominating Committee Appointment

The meeting accepted a first reading of Ministry and Counsel's recommendation of Jackie Stillwell for Nominating Committee.

26-10 Kate Kerman's Memorial Minute

With gratitude for the way it captures Kate's special qualities, Friends approved the final draft of Kate Kerman's memorial minute, as presented by Denise Ginzler.

Kate Kerman

Kathryn "Kate" Hammer Kerman was born on April 16th, 1949, in the top-secret town of Los Alamos, New Mexico, which did not show up on any map until years later. She left us on July 28th, 2025 in Keene, NH, surrounded by family in her final hours. She was a Quaker, farmer, educator, writer, an exceptional friend, wife, mother, grandmother, sister, a fierce advocate for children and non-violent conflict resolution.

She grew up on a 10-acre farm just outside Madison, Wisconsin. Her parents, Hilda Knight Hammer and Preston Clarence Hammer were unconventional, and promoted an atmosphere of open-mindedness, tolerance and intellectualism. Around age 13 she took a catechism class in a local church, but refused to be confirmed because she could not wholeheartedly believe in the creed she was expected to recite.

Her family moved to State College, Pennsylvania just before her senior year in high school. She was accepted at Kalamazoo College in Michigan, and when she arrived there in the fall of 1967 she took a folk dancing class for Physical Education credit. There she met Ed Kerman, who'd taken the class the year before and was assisting the instructor.

She began attending the Quaker Meeting in Kalamazoo with Ed. "I basically became a Quaker the first time I walked in," she said. "I've never thought of myself as anything else since I liked their approach to life". She dropped out of college in the spring of 1969, deciding to take hold of her own education and learn what she wanted without worrying about grades.

Later that year while Ed was out of the country, his mother, Cynthia, had a car accident and Kate moved to Ann Arbor to care for her. She attended Ann Arbor Friends Meeting, which at that time was anchored by strong women, including Elise Boulding, Mabel Hamm and Margaret

Blood. Kate said to Ed “I want to be part of a group like this, where women grow old in their strength, rather than being pushed aside in their weakness.”

Kate and Ed were married in 1970 at Friends Lake Community and moved to Chicago for a year and a half. When their first child, Ada, was born in Fremont, Michigan in 1972, Kate realized she wanted to get a teaching degree so she could legally home-school her children. She got that degree from Aquinas College in Grand Rapids, MI in 1977. As a follower of John Holt’s philosophy of unschooling and a pioneer of home-schooling she published three pamphlets and several articles about it.

In 1983 the family, now including Hannah (1976), and Jesse, (1979), moved to Pennsylvania. Kate studied Quaker history, produced indexes for the songbook “Rise Up Singing” and learned Therapeutic Touch, an energy healing technique, from the Institute for Therapeutic Touch and Integrated Modalities. Five years later they moved to New Hampshire, following Ada to The Meeting School, an alternative Quaker boarding school. Kate and Ed became house parents at the school, where Kate was the head of the Mathematics Department. She taught many classes including Conflict Resolution and Spiritual Autobiography, and she influenced a new generation of young people, and everyone around her.

The family moved in 1996 to a 29-acre farm in Marlborough, NH and Kate became a leader among Small and Beginning Farmers of New Hampshire. She focused on supporting and training women farmers, and ran classes in Holistic Management, a systems thinking approach that was developed for grazing management. She continued her practice of mediation by joining Cheshire Mediation, and launched the peer mediation program at Keene High School.

She supported teenagers in New England Yearly Meeting by volunteering at Young Friends retreats. She earned a Master’s degree from Lesley University, MA in 2007 to support her conflict resolution work. In recent years she put a lot of attention into connecting with the Koasek band of the Abenaki nation, taking classes in the Abenaki language and attending Pow Wows. She organized an Abenaki program in September 2024 for the Northwest Quarterly Meeting retreat, to introduce Quakers to their local Indigenous neighbors.

For Monadnock Quaker Meeting she served on Ministry and Counsel, and Adult Religious Education committees, kept the Directory up to date, and was the Recorder, keeping track of important changes in the lives of members. From 1999 she organized and facilitated Stillness

Retreats four times a year, offering members and friends a weekend of blessed silence.

Kate leaves behind her husband, Ed, of 55 years; also three children, two grandchildren, two sisters and two brothers, as well as a vast network of extended family, beloved friends, colleagues, and former students, who will miss her warmth, wisdom and hearty laugh, and her no-nonsense approach to life.

Kate was a deeply spiritual person. To sit in worship with her was to enter a place where her solid presence helped gather the silence. Her attention was profound, both in prayer and in silent worship. One Friend said “her spiritual presence changed me, and everyone around her”. She was a great teacher and an amazing mentor; she seeded empathy and understanding. One former student spoke of her classes in Therapeutic Touch as “learning how to understand ourselves” and “a foundational point in my life.” Another said that as a young person under her care, “she could hold anything with love, and add lightness”, no matter how difficult the situation. A member of the Abenaki tribe thanked her and her family for reaching out to them, sharing friendship, and building community.

Her Celebration of Life on November 8, 2025 at Monadnock Meeting opened with a song that she helped write, based on words from a letter by Fra Giovanni in 1513:

There is nothing I can give you which you need and haven't got

But there is much that you can take for your own.

Take heaven, take peace and joy.

Take peace and joy and heaven.

The song ends with the prayer that Kate lived:

So I greet you with the prayer that for you now and ever more,

The day breaks joyous and the shadows flee away.

Take joy, take heavenly peace,

Take peace and joy and heaven.

26-11 Jackie's Guatemala Trip

Jackie Stillwell recently travelled in the ministry to Guatemala, with spiritual and financial support from Monadnock Meeting and NEYM/Legacy Gift. She volunteered for an organization named *Progresa* that coordinates English-language tutoring for Guatemalans who can use these skills to access educational and vocational opportunities.

Jackie lived in Guatemala as a student of Friends World College and member of the Peace Corps in the 70's, a time of great turmoil and political violence. This was a foundational, deeply joyful, and deeply traumatic period of her life. It has taken her a long time and a lot of personal growth, as well as discernment with supportive Friends, to be ready to re-engage with Spanish-language experiences and international service. Jackie's participation with our Monthly Meeting in becoming a sister Meeting to Gibara with the *Puente de Amigos* between New England and Cuban Friends opened a part of her heart back up, and this return to the land and people of Guatemala was another step in a healing journey for Jackie, allowing her to overlay old memories with new experiences, relationships and service to others.

Judy Brophy noted that a Monadnock Meeting oversight committee helped Jackie apply to this program and prepare for her travel. *Progresa* is a program in which other Friends might also be called to serve, and our Meeting has additional funds earmarked for ministries such as this. Jackie intends to offer a more in-depth presentation as a second hour soon, and can share more information about the program and how other Friends could get involved.

26-11 Announcements

Northwest Quarterly Meeting is scheduled to convene March 7th-8th in Middlebury VT, and virtually over Zoom. Friends can get in touch with Ed Kerman if they would like to participate.

26-12 Closing Worship

Friends closed with worship, intending to reconvene March 15, 2026.

Respectfully submitted, Megan Jensen, Recording Clerk.