

May 31, 2026

Beth Hansen  
Southeast Quarterly Meeting  
Re: State of the Society – 6<sup>th</sup> Month

Smithfield Monthly Meeting of Friends continues to make incremental progress as a small, but active Meeting. The Meeting has seen more visitors over the past year as we have welcomed a renewed sense of purpose and participation in the life of the Meeting. We are grateful for the gifts, time, and talents offered by Friends and community members to help maintain the physical and spiritual life of the Meeting and our historic meetinghouse. While there are ebbs and flows in attendance from week to week, the Meeting has remained focused on continuing traditions and creating new ones to retain our core membership while welcoming new attenders.

Since December, Ron Belliveau and the Rev. Natalia de Rezendes, an interfaith minister whom we welcomed in January as a new member of Smithfield Meeting, have each recently offered monthly semi-programmed community worship services and we are grateful for their ministries. These services tend to attract more attendees than unprogrammed worship and help Smithfield Meeting continue its long tradition as a programmed Meeting. We have promoted these services on the Meeting's Facebook page.

The Building and Grounds Committee remains busy. In November, we installed a new flu liner and boiler in the Parsonage, which the Meeting rents providing a regular source of needed revenue. In the meetinghouse, we replaced the asbestos pipe insulation with new fiberglass insulation. A contractor installed new electrical circuits in the basement, we painted the basement ceilings and walls, and installed new carpet in the basement hallway. Improvements to our basement community room allow us to “have company” and we are pleased to host Southeast Quarterly Meeting for the first time in many years, which represents a significant milestone.

We are very grateful to the Obadiah Brown Benevolent Fund, which approved a \$5,500 grant to repair the front portico. We also plan to paint the north side windows over the summer. Community Service volunteers continue to maintain our historic Friends Cemetery.

Natalia de Rezendes and Rich Keene completed a Quakerism 101 online course offered by Phil Fitz. Both thoroughly enjoyed the seminar and hope to share their experience with the meeting over the coming months. Our Peace and Social Concerns Committee has shared information with the Meeting about the national Quaker Call to Action and members have been active in Quaker peace and social justice witness at area protests concerning the current state of affairs, including the Federal government's recent military actions, inhumane immigration enforcement tactics, and rising authoritarianism in the United States.

We again received a \$2,000 donation from Rachel Harper-Corey to support services for immigrants. Members approved the Peace and Social Concerns Committee recommendation to

donate \$300 each to several nonprofit organizations doing this work in Northern Rhode Island and statewide, as well as \$200 for clothing to be donated to Dorcas International clients.

A ranger from the National Park Service offered a fascinating and well attended presentation at the meetinghouse in April about Smithfield Quakers and the Revolutionary War to commemorate the U.S. 250th Anniversary. About 40 guests attended this presentation, which was also filmed as part of a documentary.

We look forward to continuing to build relationships and inter-visitation with other Meetings in the Quarter. Smithfield Friends will visit the Saylesville Meeting on June 14, where Ron Beilliveau will offer a programmed meditative service. As we honor our past, we maintain hope and faith in the future as we continue our stewardship of Smithfield Monthly Meeting.

Sincerely,

*Richard F. Keene, clerk*

Approved, Smithfield Monthly Meeting, May 31, 2026.

Endorsed, Southeast Quarterly Meeting,