

# Returning to the Great Meetinghouse for Our 350th Birthday!

Join in celebration of Friends of New England in this 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary year by traveling to Newport, Rhode Island to spend Friday afternoon and early evening at the Great Meetinghouse. The Great Meetinghouse is located at [21 Farewell St, Newport, RI 02840](https://www.google.com/maps/place/21+Farewell+St,+Newport,+RI+02840).



The Great Friends Meetinghouse was built in 1699. It is the oldest surviving house of worship in Rhode Island and was, upon its construction, the largest structure of any kind in the colonies between Boston and New York. It served as host to the annual gathering of the New England Yearly Meeting of Friends until 1905. The size of this meetinghouse was a reflection of the great number of Friends within the Newport community and beyond. Friends of today are preparing historical displays for our visit.

## The Schedule

**1:00 – 4:00 Service project at the Martin Luther King Jr. Community Center.** The Center is right next to the Great Meetinghouse. We can use all the help we can get! The Center staff have lots of work for us to do. They are looking forward to our help with the following jobs.

- **Food Pantry:** Distribution of Friday food to community members, clean up and stocking.
- **Grounds Clean up:** Bring your work gloves and some energy.
- **Carpentry:** If you have carpentry experience, please bring your tools.
- **Painting:** Bring your painting clothes! We want to finish at least one exterior wall of the Center. We will be using white exterior latex paint. Do you have some drop clothes? A favorite trim brush? Label them and bring them along!

When you arrive we'll sign you up for one or more of these projects. **You are likely to be working outside, so be sure to bring sunscreen, hats and extra drinking water. Bring umbrellas and rain gear in case of rain.**

**4:15 – 5:00 Friends will hold a silent peace vigil around the Great Meeting House.**

**5:00 – 6:00 Loaves and fishes!** Bring your picnic supper and something to share. We're asking larger groups coming from the same Meeting to bring some specific extra food to share (drinks, salads, fruit, etc.)

**6:00 – 7:30 Worship, song and history in the Meetinghouse.** There will be historical exhibits and discussion, and segments of a dramatic choral presentation, ***The Fire and the Hammer***, about the life of George Fox and the history of early Friends, with NEYM singers led by John Sheldon of Warwick Meeting in England.

**7:30 - Closing Worship.** We will close with worship. After our final clean-up, car pools will return to Bryant University for registration check in, which will be in Hall 16 until 10 pm as usual.

**Friday Overnight at Bryant University:** Friends are also invited to stay over [Friday night](#) at Bryant University. The fee (\$60/adult \$40/child) includes: Friday night lodging at Bryant and Saturday breakfast and lunch in the campus dining room.

For more information, contact the NEYM Office (508) 754-6760 or e-mail [greatmeetinghouse@neym.org](mailto:greatmeetinghouse@neym.org)