



Newsletter of the

Ithaca Monthly Meeting

of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

September 2015

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Listserv:

To join our email list for solely for meeting-related announcements, send an email message addressed to:

IMMRSF-L-request@cornell.edu
with message body as simply: join

Marilyn's List:

To email Friends and others non-specifically Quaker messages that may be of interest to Friends, consider sending your message through Marilyn Ray. To join or contribute, email:
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Answering the Call to Radical Faithfulness

— Karen Friedeborn

In the spring of 2014, historian, theologian, and long-time civil rights leader Vincent Harding gave his last public dialogue. Drawing 140 seekers to Pendle Hill from various faith traditions, Harding called on Americans to create a beloved community and real democracy together – a true “WE the people.” He said there is a vital need for “co-believers, co-workers, co-strugglers, and fellow travelers wherever they are, to find spaces where they can explore questions and be prepared to transform themselves and this country as agents of healing. Vincent Harding added, “I think there’s a word for us doing that, and without question, I think that the spelling of that word may be Pendle Hill.” (Pendle Hill Website)

A year later Pendle Hill launched a new five-month on-line/on-campus interfaith course on non-violent activism and grass roots organizing called Answering the Call to Radical Faithfulness. I am thrilled that I had the opportunity to participate in this pilot program, thanks to financial support from Ithaca Monthly Meeting. This course (that included 5 five-day residencies) is designed to bring together an interfaith group of seekers to explore the spiritual call to create a beloved community. I have returned to Ithaca inspired to act and share what I have learned with our Meeting.

I have come to the conclusion that lasting social change is embedded in a beloved community, or the “Gospel Order” in Quaker speak, whether that community is based in a neighborhood, a faith group, or social action campaign. I believe that it is the quality of the relationships formed that will move us forward more than the purpose that united people in the first place. People coming together in authentic, loving, relationship with one another, while supporting each other to live spirit-led lives, is in itself the definition of Gospel Order or what I prefer to call the beloved community. According to New York Yearly Meeting Faith & Practice, “our order, organization, testimonies, and closeness

Radical Faithfulness, continued on page 2

Driving to Jail: Thirteen Years and Going Strong

— Elizabeth Schneider

There is a well-worn saying that “time flies.” And so often it seems quite true. It is 13 years since Barbara Barry had a leading to do something to support the families of those incarcerated in our County Jail. She worked with OAR (Opportunities, Alternatives and Resources), the Tompkins County organization that assists persons involved with the criminal justice system, and their families. An important unmet need was identified – that many people in our County do not own or have access to a car, making it impossible to get to the jail to see a family member or a friend for the Tuesday and Saturday visiting hours. And when families and friends are in a stressful situation, like incarceration, staying connected is important. The visits are a time to be with one another, maybe to hash out some of the complex feelings that are going on, to laugh, to argue, to cry, to try and say

Driving to Jail, continued on page 2

come from God through the relationships between people that Jesus described in parables and showed through his healing, counsel, and prophecy.” We cannot live our faith alone, for it is in the relationship with others that we express the light.

I believe that people turn to divine guidance and each other the most in times of tragedy and suffering. We witnessed the beloved community briefly after terrorist attacks such as 911 when we saw many, many examples of self-sacrifice, courage and compassion among strangers. There was unprecedented outpouring of agape love.

We saw another example of the beloved community after the most recent terrorist attack at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, SC, when an overflow crowd of hundreds, people of all ages and races, showed up at the Mother Emanuel church, at our own meetinghouse and in faith communities everywhere to stand with and pray for the families of those who were gunned down in this terrible tragedy.

The outpouring of love and a feeling of spiritual communion in times of crisis, often among strangers, is testament to ability to love our neighbor as we love ourselves regardless of race or creed.

On Wednesday, June 17th, the day of the Charleston terrorist attack, the Ithaca Journal published a statement of conscience from Ithaca Monthly Meeting calling on people to “reach across the illusions of racial differences in each of our personal encounters – at work, in stores, and on the street – and respond in some personal and individual way to simply help someone else meet our common human needs ... There is no greater power for change than a growing number of individuals committed to helping each other to realize and act from Truth.”

How do we propose to do this as a faith community? How do we create a beloved community while living our every day lives? I believe that Ithaca Monthly Meeting is being led toward doing this work as a spiritual community. I look forward to the journey with you.

important things. The visits can be frustrating; they can be enjoyable or upsetting. And this project brings folks together for the whole gamut of conversations.

Over these 13 years, thousands of miles have been driven all around this County. And while many roads were being traversed, drivers have had amazing conversations with riders. We do a lot of listening, at a time when that is needed. And thus we learn the value of this project.

The unasked question about this driving is whether it is a dangerous thing to do. In all of the 13 years of this project, there have been no incidents. None.

Drivers have come from our Meeting, from other faith communities, and from people who want to be a part of this program.

If you have a car, a free morning or afternoon, and a willingness to join with the dozen people who are currently driving, please speak with me (Elizabeth Schneider) at Meeting, or give me a call (273-3566). If you know someone who you think might like this volunteer opportunity, let me know. Just remember its purpose is to help jail inmates stay connected with family and friends – one ride at a time.

Northside Community Celebration a Success!

We could not have asked for a more beautiful day for the 2nd Northside Community Celebration. August 8th was a bright sunny day to match the spirits of the 300 people who came to enjoy good food, good music, childrens’ activities and good company at the Third Street Meetinghouse. A big thanks to Friends who came to help out and a special thank you to Tom Ruscitti and the Lone Mountain Rangers for playing some old-time tunes for us. Christopher Church and Phoebe Brown also deserve a round of applause for their splendid job as Masters of ceremony and Edna Brown for her beau-

Hear Better in Meeting for Worship: New Personal Hearing Amplification Devices

Ithaca Monthly Meeting has purchased four new personal hearing amplification devices. On Sunday mornings, you’ll find them in a basket on the small chest of drawers in the corner of the meeting room just past the library doors as you enter.

Instructions will be put out shortly, but each unit is designed like a handheld remote device, with an on/off button, volume control, and tone control (to dial the treble up or down). If you’re having trouble hearing a particular speaker, you can point the unit toward the speaker and the unit will act like a microphone, amplifying the voice and sending it through the headphones. Three units have headphones. The fourth has a neck loop that broadcasts to hearing aids that are in very close proximity. Look out for this one if your hearing aids are so equipped; most are.

The units need to be charged every couple of uses or so. They are very light and portable and easy to walk away with if you’re not paying attention. Please make an extra effort to return them to the basket so we can recharge them and keep track of them all.

We hope these go some way toward solving the problem of vocal ministry that is difficult to hear during Meeting for Worship. Let us know how the devices work for you.

— *Ministry and Worship*

tiful photos of the event. Please be sure to look at the photos of the celebration on display in the meetinghouse.

We are grateful to the following businesses and organizations for their contributions to the event: Bici-Cocina Bicycle Food Cart, Cayuga Center for Healthy Living/Cayuga Medical Center/ Cornell Cooperative Extension of TC, GIAC, GreenStar Food Market, Ithaca Bakery, Kendal at Ithaca. Ithaca Neighborhood Housing Services, Ithaca Youth Bureau, Multicultural Resource Center, Papa Johns, Purity Ice Cream, Red Feet Wine Market, Twelve Tribes, The Piggery, Istanbul Turkish Kitchen.”

Rise Again Concert

We are beginning to widely publicize the Rise Again Concert and will be distributing publicity, quarter sheets and posters, as well as selling tickets and taking book orders after Meeting on First Day.

We are adding more sponsors, if Friends belong to an organization that would like to sign on as a sponsor and/or would like to have a table in the lobby to distribute information about any organizations or issues you are involved in, let me know.

We will also need at least 6 ushers for this concert. If you would like to volunteer let me know.

It would be very helpful if Friends would help distribute tickets to family and friends in the community, particularly those who can't afford the regular price, which we can discount to \$10 or offer for free. Contact me for tickets. Thanks,

— *Melody Johnson,*
rcrepea1@twcny.rr.com 272-8755

Come to the Rise Again Singalong Benefit Concert

By the creators of the original "Rise Up Singing", come celebrate the creation of the new edition, Rise Again. The benefit concert will be October 31st at 7:30pm at St Paul's Methodist Church (402 N. Aurora Street) in Ithaca.

Performers include Annie Patterson & Peter Blood, Kim & Reggie Harris, Sparky & Rhonda Rucker, Charlie King, & special guest Jan Nigro.

Tickets are available at Green Star, Autumn Leaves, Ithaca Guitar Works & <https://www.riseupandsing.org/events/rise-again-ithaca> \$18 in advance \$20 at the door, HS and younger \$5 Rise Up books available at discount.

Sponsors:

Ithaca Friends
Poplar Ridge Friends
Perry City Friends
We Are Seneca Lake
Ithaca Catholic Workers

Are you all jammed up inside?
Then you are ill,
even if your illness has no name.
Arise to your full stature in God
and feel the winds of Life
blow through you, creating inner
space.
And if you are bent over,
then let your bending be to Love.
Do you see?
Walk in healing ways,
whose unhurried increase of holy
space
un-jams you . . .
Go in peace.

— *Sparrow*



Donations Needed

Of all the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) Nations, the Cayuga people were the only Nation to receive no land upon which to live and maintain their culture and way of life. In recent years, a small farm, the S.H.A.R.E. Farm near Aurora, was gifted to the Cayuga people, and a small group of Cayuga folks relocated there and began the effort of making this a Cayuga homeplace.

Recently the Cayuga Nation has been facing serious challenges. As with many First Nations, there are divisions within the Cayuga Nation that have caused disruption and distress. Most recently, one faction has taken over the store, causing people to lose their jobs. The people at the S.H.A.R.E. Farm need help feeding everyone.

This is a time when Friends can stand in support of our Cayuga neighbors. If you can donate food or drinks, you can leave your donations at the meetinghouse and I can see that they are delivered. Or you can contact the people at the S.H.A.R.E. Farm directly: Dan Hill, Cayuga elder, at 716-298-8557 or his partner Donna Silversmith at 716-807-8257.

September in IMM History

5 Years Ago (Sept 12, 2010)

IMM approved a proposal from the Project Management Committee for renovation of the new Third Street Meetinghouse by Latipac at a cost not to exceed \$349,108. IMM also approved a new standing committee and its charge for the Third Street Meetinghouse.

Melissa Mueller Blake was welcomed into membership of IMM upon transferal from the Concord, PA Monthly Meeting.

10 Years Ago (Sept 11, 2005)

Antonia Saxon was welcomed into membership of IMM.

30 Years Ago (Sept 9, 1985)

Joanne Sturgeon transmitted the positive recommendation of the committee on clearness for marriage for Suzanne Kates and Steve Gaarder and their marriage under care of IMM was approved. A marriage oversight committee was appointed.

65 Years Ago (Sept 11, 1950)

"Friends had gathered in silence in the Barnes Hall lounge on Aug. 29 for the funeral of IMM beloved member Joshua Cope, who passed away suddenly at his home on August 26. Although feeling deeply the loss of one of the Meeting's founders and most faithful members, our minds were lifted by memories of Joshua's lifelong interest and devotion to all things which pertained to Friends and Friendly practices, and our spirits were strengthened by the faith and serenity of Edith Cope and her family. Joshua Cope's influence will long remain a very real part of our Meeting." This minute was read at the Business Meeting of September 11.

70 Years Ago (Sept 10, 1945)

Ed Hendrickson of Big Flats Monthly Meeting invited Ithaca Friends to send representatives to the Conference of Western New York Friends meeting at the Civilian Public Service camp at Big Flats Oct. 6-7. The general topic was how to turn into useful and friendly channels the energies which have been devoted to war-time activities. Elmira Friends offered cooperation in arranging lodging for women [implying that men could lodge at the camp].

— *Tom Brown, Meeting Historian*

Faith and Contemplation of the Cosmos

9:00-10:15 a.m. Sunday, September 20, second floor, Third Street Meeting House

It is difficult in these times, especially in urban areas, to see the night sky clearly. But when we get that opportunity, it can be an awesome experience—the moon glittering on water, Venus lighting the early morning or evening sky, thousands of stars twinkling overhead, the dense band of The Milky Way arching overhead (as we look from inside the galaxy in which we live). Our contemplation of the physical universe is enhanced by optical aids such as binoculars and telescopes, and enormously complicated by the findings of modern astronomers, who now largely agree that the universe began with a Big Bang a little more than 13 billion years ago; is rapidly expanding; and contains billions of galaxies, each with billions of stars, most of which are circled by planets—some of which likely hold life forms that we can only imagine.

How do such experiences and knowledge affect our religious faith? Do we feel, with the Psalmist: “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork” (19:1)? Does the philosopher Bertrand Russell express our own gloomiest thoughts about the physical universe: “Brief and powerless is Man’s life; on him and all his race the slow, sure doom falls pitiless and dark. Blind to good and evil, reckless of destruction, omnipotent matter

rolls on its relentless way”? Can we take comfort in the views of Quaker astronomer Jocelyn Bell Burnell: “The God that I experience is a loving, caring, enabling God . . . But as an astronomer, I do not believe in a God who was the prime creator of the universe”?

In this program, we will look at projections of a few astronomical illustrations and photographs. Then we will share our personal feelings and ideas in light of brief passages (read before the session, if possible) from these and other writers. The texts will be available on the table in the entry hall starting September 13, and emailed in advance to all who request them from the program facilitator—and sometimes amateur astronomer—Wallace Watson (wallwat7@gmail.com).

—Program Committee

Women’s Chair Yoga Mondays and Thursdays 11a-noon

We will be meeting more regularly after some missed sessions over the summer. Gentle, cheerful, centered movement to restore ourselves. Questions to Nancy Gabriel 339-7123, call or text OK.

— Nancy Gabriel

September 2015 Calendar of Ithaca Monthly Meeting

Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business Sunday, September 13, Rise of Meeting

Join in the Quaker decision-making process. Agenda items should be sent to our clerk, Antonia Saxon, by the preceding Wednesday. (Note that this Meeting is scheduled for Mother’s Day this year. No workable alternative dates could be found.)

Faith and Contemplation of the Cosmos Sunday, September 20, 9a

Join amateur astronomer Wallace Watson for a discussion. See description above for more information.

Newsletter submissions due Thursday, September 24, 5p

Please provide your newsletter contributions to Marin Clarkberg: 150 Giles St., 14850, 607-279-4722, clarkberg@cornell.edu.

Dish-to-Pass Brunch Sunday, September 27, Rise of Meeting

Bring something tasty to share if you can. All are welcome.

On Sundays

- 10:00a **Meeting for Worship** at Hector Meetinghouse on Perry City Road
- 10:30a **Meeting for Worship** for all ages at Third Street
- 10:45a **First Day School** attenders exit the meetingroom and gather for play or other activities.

Other Weekly IMM Events

- Wed 7:30p **Meeting for worship** at the Burrtt House, 227 N. Willard Way
- Sun 1:00p **Friends Bike Clinic** last three meetings at the Meetinghouse this season are 8/30, 9/6, 9/13. You bring your bike and a willingness to get your hands dirty. We bring tools and know-how.