



Newsletter of the

Ithaca Monthly Meeting

of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

December 2009

IMM CONTACTS

Clerk:

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Listserv:

Send email to lyris@cornell.edu. Leave the subject line blank and include: join IMMRSF-L "Your Name" (include the quotes) in the first line of the body of the message.

Website: ithacamonthlymeeting.org

Events:

If you are interested in setting up or scheduling a program or presentation for our meeting, please see the instructions on the meeting website.

NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS

Due January 1st

Materials for January 3rd's newsletter may be submitted by the method of your choice to:

Rini Clarkberg
150 Giles St., Ithaca, NY 14850
279-4722 • mec30@cornell.edu

Notice of Annual Meeting Sunday, January 10, 2010

Trustees announce that the annual meeting of IMMRSF Inc. will be held on Sunday, January 10, 2010 at the rise of meeting in the Café of Anabel Taylor Hall. The Annual Meeting of the Corporation, including the annual report of the trustees, will be followed by the Annual Meeting of the Ithaca Monthly Meeting.

The Annual Meeting of the Corporation is legally required and it is important for as many members and attenders as possible to attend. The Annual Meeting of IMM is a special event, where we listen to reports of all Meeting's activities for the past year. It is moving to reflect on just how much our Friends do. Please Plan to attend!

... and that Means It's Time to Write Annual Reports!

Now is the time to plan for and prepare committee reports for our January 10th Annual Meeting. Annual reports are expected of all standing committees. Please give Tom Brown, Clerk, an electronic copy, if possible, of annual reports no later than late Tuesday, January 5. Feel free to contact Tom if you have questions.

Spiritual Discernment

from Ministry & Oversight

One of my favorite definitions of discernment is the ability to see that which is holy in life.

— Stephen Finn, "The Ministry of Naming"
Friends Journal, December 15, 1986

Listening to God implies that God speaks. This may put some people off. They have had no clarion calls like the ones which came to Samuel or to Saul. Friends usually refer to something less dramatic, more subtle: a sense of Presence, or of the Inward Teacher or Guide. I doubt if anyone here has not felt over and over again a persistent inner tugging, an inner stirring or prompting, a sudden rapture or welling up of thankfulness, a comforting or encouraging which is not yourself speaking to yourself. There may be no audible voice, but there is movement in the heart, a sense of Otherness that one is aware of."

— "On Listening to God and to Each Other",
a talk given by Dorothy Steere,
published by The Wider Quaker Fellowship

City Walk

by Thea Clarkberg

My feet thud dully
on the sidewalk,
throbbing

A bus hisses,
letting out air

Another car screeches,
braking

White specks dance
in front of the cars' headlights
that shine in our eyes

As we head towards
our dinner.

Announcements

Notes from Library

On the library shelf in the Edwards Room are lots of new pamphlets and brochures. Some are Friends General Conference (FGC) materials with information about Quakerism and Quaker worship, and some have information about our Meeting.

There are also copies of New York Yearly Meeting Faith and Practice to purchase or to borrow.

If you would like to keep any of the pamphlet materials, please leave a donation in the container provided on the shelf by the materials. This way we can replenish the pamphlets and keep new ones coming. Also, your donations will help provide new books as well.

Books for borrowing have pockets with sign-out cards. When you borrow a book, please fill out the card and leave it in the Sign-Out Box there.

If you have borrowed a book from the Burt House, it can be returned to the Edwards Room shelf and we will see that it gets to the right place.

Change in Peace Vigil Time

The weekly Peace Vigil takes place on Thursdays from 5:00 to 5:30p at the foot of East State Street. This month there is a change since the last two Thursdays fall on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve. To replace those days, the Peace Vigil will take place on Tuesdays, December 22 and 29 at the same time (5:00 to 5:30) and the same place (the foot of East State Street). All are welcome. If you get there first, our peace signs are kindly held for us at Mayer's Shop, 318 East State Street.

Native America Video Titles Sought

From our Yearly Meeting's Indian Affairs Committee: We received a request from Andrew David of the Longhouse group at Sing Sing prison. They would like (VHS format only) movies of the following titles: *Last of the Dogmen*, *Last of the Mohicans*, *Lakota Woman*, *Broken Chain*, *Broken Arrow*, *Dances with Wolves*, *Clear Cut*, *Apocalypto*, *Black Robe*, *Squanto*, *Smoke Signals*. If anyone would like to donate a copy of any of these movies (used is fine), please contact Susan Wolf at QuakerWolf@gmail.com or call 272-1618. You can also bring them to Meeting to pass to Susan. Thanks!

Words to Consider from Meeting for Healing

A story must be told in such a way that it constitutes help in itself... My grandfather was lame. Once they asked him to tell a story about his teacher. And he related how this teacher used to hop and dance while he prayed. My grandfather rose as he spoke, and he was so swept away by his story that he began to hop and dance to show how the master had done. From that hour on he was cured of his lameness. That's how to tell a story.

— Martin Buber

West Dryden Church Now Reduced

606 W Dryden Road property has been reduced from an original listing price of \$139,900 to \$84,000.00. To view the listing, see: <http://www.navica2.net/displays/?n=378&ci=975973&ck=fS6mv4>

Living Wage Initiative for Christmas Season

Marjorie Baines, our meeting's representative for the Religious Taskforce for a Living Wage announces a new initiative, appropriate to align with your Christmas shopping.

It involves colorful postcards—available from Marjorie—addressed to Barnes and Noble and Borders Bookstores urging them to pay their employees a living wage. A living wage is spelled out on the postcard along with the reminder that two local bookstores, Autumn Leaves and Buffalo Books, already do so, along with 66 local businesses, non-profits, government agencies and Houses of Worship. The card has a place to sign that as a customer who has spent money in their store we ask this change. This is a chance as consumers to influence policy and promote economic justice in the stores we like and patronize.

The cards can be mailed to the store or given to Marjorie to give to the Taskforce to take to the manager to make a more united impression. Can you join this timely effort and give Marjorie a call? She has lots of cards for either or both stores.

Meeting Friends



Melissa Mueller was raised Quaker, attending Westtown Meeting and Corncord Meeting outside of Philadelphia, as well as Sandy Spring Friends School in Maryland. Her current work in outdoor education stemmed, in part, from her earlier experiences at Catoctin Quaker Camp, the summer camp of Baltimore Yearly Meeting. Melissa has been attending Ithaca Monthly Meeting since the summer of 2007 and remains a member of Concord Monthly Meeting.

Melissa Mueller and Ernest Blake would like to announce their engagement to be married. The wedding will take place sometime in 2010. Best wishes to them both for a long and happy union.

New Committee for Pastoral Care

Many members of our Meeting, without being asked or appointed, have quietly ministered to other members of our community, sometimes for a weekend, sometimes over periods of months or even years. They travel to the homes of ill or elderly Friends to hold Meeting for Worship, bring meals, do shopping, provide rides to appointments, watch children and often just sit and listen.

In many meetings, this work has traditionally been assigned to Ministry and Oversight committees. In Ithaca Monthly Meeting, the Ministry and Oversight committee has not been able to do all of this work, and has depended on the work of these silent Friends.

Monthly Meeting has approved the formation of a small committee of three or four individuals who feel called to this ministry. The committee will make it easier to identify both Friends in need, and Friends willing to lend a hand. We hope that having an established committee will also make it easier for Friends to ask for help. The Pastoral Care committee will

- Identify Friends who are in emotional, material, or spiritual need
- Develop a list of people in meeting who are willing to provide specific kinds of assistance, and link these people with those needing care
- Reach out and offer help to those who are frail, ill, or incapacitated
- Arrange for material aid where it may be needed
- Keep in touch with members and attenders who are isolated or homebound
- Designate a liaison to meet with M&O quarterly

The Scholarship Committee

The scholarship committee is a sub-committee of M&O. They serve on an “as-needed basis” to review requests for scholarship funds and to direct the Treasurer to pay funds from the scholarship fund in the yearly budget. The committee tries to actively promote the availability of funds to support Meeting members and attenders in their spiritual growth and ongoing service to the Meeting. Attendance at various events is not only a form of outreach from our Meeting but also an opportunity for people to bring back to the Meeting information, ideas, renewed enthusiasm and support. In this spirit the committee seeks to provide nurture for the betterment of both individuals and the Meeting as a whole. The committee tries to gather information and reach a decision quickly, understanding that a timely response will allow the person requesting funds an opportunity to plan for their attendance. The committee reviews upcoming gatherings, conferences and workshops at Powell House, Pendle Hill, Friends General Conference, NY Yearly Meeting at Silver Bay, and other similar retreats and submits newsletter items informing Friends of upcoming possibilities. In some instances, the Committee may discover a workshop

that they feel would definitely benefit our Meeting and therefore, create a scholarship and recruit someone to go. Sometimes people want to go but may need a little push and this committee may be able to do that.

In the past there has usually been a 1/3 – 1/3 – 1/3 consideration for funds. The committee asks the person who is requesting funds if he or she has asked the conference sponsor or some other source for a third of the cost. The person is asked if he or she can afford a third and the Meeting picks up the remaining third. This practice has generally worked well.

In addition to the above allocations, there exists “First Timer Scholarships” to Powell House, which offer a 50% scholarship to someone attending for the first time. The Scholarship Committee could match the other 50%, thereby making attendance free, as an incentive to encourage first time attendees. In addition, the Scholarship Committee could offer 50 % First Timer Scholarships to those who would like to attend Spring Gathering for the first time.

While the committee would hope that the above guidelines and incentives would work well in most circumstances, the committee is aware that there are some other possibilities that could arise. In some cases the person is not able to secure a third of the cost from the conference sponsor or another source. In some cases the cost of the workshop is too high for the person to manage one-third from their own funds. The committee has developed a case by case practice of asking a series of questions (below). These questions help the committee reach a fair discernment of support for all the people who come with a request.

1. Is the person who is asking for the funds currently serving on committees for the Meeting or on committees outside the Meeting, but part of NY Yearly Meeting, Regional Meeting, etc.?
2. Are we encouraging many people (attenders and members) to go to workshops, training, Silver Bay, FGC, Powell House, etc. and to use available Meeting resources to support these efforts?
3. Will the person not be able to go if they do not have this support from the scholarship funds?
4. How much is currently available in the scholarship fund and are there other requests before the committee?
5. Has this person come to the committee in the past for scholarship help?

The committee discusses the above questions and comes to a decision about the request. The person is informed and the Treasurer is asked to meet the request.

M&O reminds future Scholarship Committee members that the scholarship funds are also used to reimburse Regional and NYYM Representatives for expenses incurred when they travel to serve the Meeting.

Quaker Events in Our Region

It's Time for You to Think About Powell House

Powell House is the conference and retreat center of New York Yearly Meeting - Religious Society of Friends.

Gifted to New York Yearly Meeting in 1960, Powell House is a Quaker conference and retreat center, conducive to spiritual reflection, inspiration, and renewal. Their mission is to foster the spiritual growth of Friends (Quakers) and others and to strengthen the application of Friends' testimonies in the world.

Most weekends Powell House offers intergenerational, adult, and youth programs.

Most adult and intergenerational retreats are held in Pitt Hall, a large, rambling house, which can provide gathering space for up to 125 people. There are rooms for various size gatherings, a children's playroom, a bookstore and a gift shop. Our dining room can seat up to 70 people. We can accommodate 40 guests overnight in the 14 bedrooms with 10 full and half baths—some attached to rooms and others down the hall. Comfortable furnishing throughout give Pitt Hall a friendly, home-like, and relaxed atmosphere.

Outside, Powell House has 57 acres of forests, lawns, gardens, and fields. An outdoor labyrinth, swimming pond, trails through woods, and a campground provide refreshing and rejuvenating outdoor opportunities.

As part of our commitment to create community and being a place that's affordable for all, guests assist in mealtime and other minor chores. To make our retreats available to parents, if given at least three weeks notice, Powell House provides childcare and a Children's Program during adult program weekends. Some upcoming weekends for adults and youth:

- Dec 30-Jan 1 Annual New Year's Celebration (all ages)
- January 15-17 Silent Retreat: Dwelling Deep (adults)
- January 15-17 Sweet Relaxation (6th & 7th graders)
- January 22-24 Feeding The Fire: Faithfulness (adults)
- January 22-24 Soul Funk (10th - 12th graders)
- February 5-7 Creativity and Spirituality: Quilting, Weaving, Knitting & Poetry (adults)
- February 5-7 On The Cusp of Cupid (8th & 9th graders)
- February 12-14 Family Fun, Quaker Parenting, & Children's Activities
- February 26-28 Clerking with Arthur Larrabee (adults)
- February 26-28 Snow Drifts (4th & 5th graders)

For more information about these and other events, please visit the recently redesigned Powell House website: <www.powellhouse.org>.

For more information about IMM scholarships for Powell House, see "The Scholarship Committee" on page 3.

Midwinter Gathering for FLGBTQC

All Friends are warmly invited to the 2010 Midwinter Gathering of Friends for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Concerns at the Graymoor Spiritual Life Center in the Hudson Valley of New York State. Friends for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Concerns is a North American Quaker faith community that affirms that of God in all people. Gathering twice yearly for worship and play, we draw sustenance from each other and from the Spirit for our work and life in the world. We are learning that radical inclusion and radical love bring further light to Quaker testimony and life.

Midwinter Gathering will be Friday, February 12 to Monday, February 15, 2010 with the theme "Stitching our quilts, Waving our banners". Join us!

We intend our theme of "Stitching our quilts, Waving our banners" to be an opportunity for us to explore the diverse ways we build relationships and communities, how we build and claim pride in that diversity, and how we build mutual support and accountability with our wider communities. We will have a keynote speaker and a panel to speak about the variety of our relationships and how our Meetings support us in that diversity. There will also be a threshing session and time in our Meetings for Worship for Business to consider how to bring to life the FLGBTQC Midwinter Gathering 2009 epistle, which speaks of "bringing Quakers together to help us all understand what is meant by 'that which God joins together.'"

The weekend will also include the opportunity to participate in small-group worship sharing each morning, workshops and interest groups, evening social activities, free time to relax and explore the beautiful grounds, and all-community worship each day.

Details on childcare, financial aid, transportation, our program, and the site are available online at <http://sites.google.com/site/midwinter2010> or by contacting us at nymidwinter@gmail.com, 410-236-3372. Registration materials are also available at that website. Register early to ensure on-site housing!

In Our Community

Art Opening at CSMA

Ann Rhodin's art will be in the Community School of Music, & Arts Annual Open Show. The show will be open from December 4th through January 29th. CSMA's hours are Monday through Thursday, 9a-6p and 9-5 on Friday.

Minutes of the November Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business Ithaca Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

Tom Brown, Clerk
Steve Mohlke, Assistant Clerk
Marilyn Ray and Nancy Gabriel, Co-Recording Clerks
Steve Mohlke, Treasurer

(The @ signifies that the minute has been read and approved during Meeting. Please note that copies of all reports provided during this Meeting are on file with and available from the Recording Clerks.)

200911.1 Gathering. The Ithaca Monthly Meeting (IMM) of the Religious Society of Friends met on November 8, 2009, in the Café at Anabel Taylor Hall, Cornell University, for Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business. At 12:40 p.m., 30 F/friends settled into worship. Clerk read NYYM Queries #14 and 15 (available in the October IMM newsletter). The Minutes were read from the October Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business. Clerk reviewed and amended the agenda for the day's business. Bruce Berggren-Thomas served by holding the Meeting in the Light during the conduct of business.

200911.2 Report from Ministry and Oversight. Bronwyn Mohlke reported on several matters for the committee. 1) Special Meetings for Worship during the holidays: M&O has approved the following: a Thanksgiving Day meeting at Hector Meeting House, Thursday 11/26 at 10:30AM; our Christmas pageant and dish-to-pass meal, Sunday 12/20 in Anabel Taylor. Also, if Friends indicate that they will attend, there would be a Christmas Eve meeting Thursday 12/24 at the Burt House, 7 PM; Christmas Day 12/25 at Hector MH, 10:30 AM; and New Years' Eve 12/31, at the Burt House, 11 PM. Friends who will attend any of these three Meetings for Worship should contact Bronwyn Mohlke, confirming their intention, before the December newsletter deadline. 2) Proposed Pastoral Care Committee: Bronwyn read the proposal for this committee, which had been distributed via the IMM list and on paper. Questions and discussion followed. It is clear that coordination with M&O will be integral to defining the functions of pastoral care. Meeting APPROVED formation of the Pastoral Care Committee. 3) M & O Committee Charge. Bronwyn read the proposed charge for Ministry and Oversight, as part of IMM's ongoing process of review and approval of all committee charges. The charge as proposed, and which was distributed as part of in the Clerk's tentative agenda for today's meeting, was APPROVED.

A Friend expressed concern that, unlike several other Meetings, Ithaca retains the name "Ministry and Oversight" rather than "Ministry and Counsel". Many Friends are uncomfortable with the term Oversight, which is related to the word "overseer." It was suggested and approved that our M & O committee should consider the name change after January 2010. @

200911.3 Nominating Committee. Melody Johnson brought the committee's preliminary report indicating progress so far on naming F/friends willing to serve in 2010 and after. Vacancies remain and all F/friends are encouraged to take advantage of these opportunities. @

200911.4 Social Justice Committee. Barbara Barry brought a proposal related to IMM's ongoing service of providing transportation

to people visiting loved ones in the Tompkins County jail. In the seven years of this project, and in consultation with Opportunities, Alternatives, and Resources (OAR), we have become aware of a need for a way to offer modest but concrete help to people affected by incarceration who have specific plans toward making changes for a more successful future. OAR has established and will administer a fund for small grants or loans, and has appropriated \$500 as seed money. Social Justice asked to match that amount. Meeting APPROVED the following Minute:

Ithaca Monthly Meeting approves granting \$500 from budgeted Social Justice Committee funds as seed money for the new OAR fund to help people affected by incarceration to create and implement plans toward a more successful future. @

200911.5 Finance Committee. Dick Crepeau distributed copies of the committee's report, along with the monthly Treasurer's report and preliminary 2010 budget proposal. 1) In response to the charge from September business meeting (Minute 200909.2), Finance Committee developed summaries and estimates of funds available for acquisition of a meetinghouse, with and without sale of the Burt House. After questions and clarifications, Meeting received the report. 2) Dick then turned attention to the 2010 proposed budget, and Friends offered questions and comment. The 2010 budget proposal will come before December business meeting for approval, so Friends are urged to study and consider it and to contact anyone on Finance Committee with questions or concerns in the next few weeks. Contact Mike Simkin, Treasurer, to get a copy of the draft budget. @

200911.6 Treasurer's report. Mike Simkin offered further explanations of the four-page report, which includes both monthly figures and the draft budget for next year. Meeting received the report.

200911.7 Discussion of phased approach to obtaining a meetinghouse. Clerk introduced the discussion by briefly reviewing recent efforts of IMM to find the way forward. Steve Mohlke read the written considerations on a "phased approach", which have circulated electronically over the last several weeks, and also appear in the November newsletter. He then presented some further thoughts on our evolving process. Clerk opened the discussion for Friends to share their thoughts. Along with those voicing specific concerns about the Burt House, several Friends expressed a need and an enthusiasm that something be done. Clerk asked: Is there conceptual approval to move forward with this suggestion of a phased approach, giving some direction for how to move forward but without specific proposals? Friends answered affirmatively. @

200911.8 Next business meeting. Our next Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business will be held on December 13, 2009, in the Café at Anabel Taylor Hall after the rise of Meeting for Worship.

At 2:57 PM, 29 F/friends gathered in silent worship before adjourning.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Gabriel, Co-Recording Clerk

Advices & Queries from NYYM Faith & Practice

Advice 13. It is recommended that Friends take the opportunity, on occasions when special statements or oaths are required, to advance the cause of truth by simple affirmation, thus emphasizing that their statement is only a part of their usual integrity of speech.

Query 13. Do we maintain Friends' testimony against war? Do we "live in the virtue of that life and power which takes away the occasion of all wars"? Are we exerting our influence in favor of settlement of all differences by truly nonviolent methods? Do we strive to transmit to everyone an understanding of the basis of our peace testimony?

December 2009 Calendar of Ithaca Monthly Meeting

Peace Witness Committee Tuesday, December 8, 7:30p

The Peace Witness Committee will meet at the Burtt House. All are welcome as we work to bring Friends' Peace Testimony to life. Bring your ideas on how we can best do that.

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

Please provide agenda items to Tom Brown by November 5th.

Floating Meeting Sunday, December 13, 6p

Friends are invited for a dish-to-pass supper, cookie decorating, and Christmas carol singing at the Clarkberg's home, 150 Giles Street.

Women's Fellowship Friday, December 18, 7p

Meet at the Smart Monkey Cafe to talk about whatever we darn well feel like talking about, while enjoying a dessert, a great burger, coffee and/or a cold beer.

Christmas Pageant Sunday, December 20, Meeting for Worship

The children will present the gathered Meeting with a version of the Christmas story. Meeting for Worship—with the pageant—will be in the One World Room of Anabel Taylor Hall.

Christmas Dish-to-Pass Dinner Sunday, December 20, Rise of Meeting

Please bring a dish to share as well as place settings for yourself, and join friends in joyful communion in the Anabel Taylor cafe.

Meeting for Healing Tuesday, December 22, 7:15p

A Meeting for Healing is held at 7:15 on the fourth Tuesday of every month at Melody Johnson and Dick Crepeau's house (112 Mount Pleasant Road). If you have a concern but cannot attend, let Melody know and you will be held in the Light. For more information, call Melody at 272-8755.

Christmas Eve Meeting for Worship Thursday, December 24, 7p

Join Friends at the Burtt House for a special Meeting for Worship.

Christmas Eve Open House Thursday, December 24, 6-10p

Please stop by (or even stay awhile) the Murdough/Marshall Estate any time between 6:00 and 11:00 pm on Christmas Eve for some holiday cheer, either before meeting, after the meeting (or shh... even during meeting). Toni and Kristen will be serving up a bounty of glad tidings and would love to share them with you and yours. Their home is right in downtown Ithaca, 520 North Tioga Street (the corner of Tioga and Marshall). The phone is, 273-9037 but there is no need to call, just ring the doorbell..

New Year's Eve Meeting for Worship

Join Friends at the Burtt House for a special, year-end Meeting for Worship.

Every Sunday

- 11:00a **Meeting for Worship** for all ages
- 11:15a Children are invited to join **First Day School** classes gathering outside the Edwards Room

Other Weekly IMM Events

- Tues 9-9:20p **Worship** in your own home
- Wed 7:30p **Midweek meeting** for worship at the Burtt House
- Thurs 5-5:30p **Peace Vigil** at the bottom of East State Street near the Community School for Music and Arts