



Newsletter of the

Ithaca Monthly Meeting

of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

February 2010

IMM CONTACTS

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Burt House:

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227 N. Willard Way, Ithaca, NY 14850
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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 February 25th

Materials for February 28th'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

Towards a Meetinghouse

— *Steve Mohlke*

After a couple years of not discussing a Meetinghouse, we considered the possible purchase of the West Dryden Road church this past summer. We concluded our discussions with the question "If not this, then what?"

In October, we formally confirmed that the Burt House currently provides several valuable functions, some of which may not be replicated in a Meetinghouse.

In November the Finance Committee presented a report outlining the Meeting's current and estimated potential funds available for a Meetinghouse. Also in November, we gave conceptual approval to a phased approach to acquiring a Meetinghouse. The document suggesting the phased approach contained two important elements. It would be okay to go ahead with acquiring a Meetinghouse while retaining the Burt House in its present role for the foreseeable future and, secondly, that it would be okay to acquire a Meetinghouse without a kitchen if including one made it unaffordable.

I'd like to share my perspective and offer some possible next steps. During the West Dryden Road discussions, we shared openly with each other and listened with respect. These qualities were often absent in Meetinghouse discussions from several years ago. At that time, it seems we could not have agreed to retain the Burt House for the foreseeable future. This effectively removes a major stumbling block in our discussions since we can now focus on a Meetinghouse without wondering about the disposition of the Burt House. By agreeing that a kitchen could be a delayed feature of a Meetinghouse, we give ourselves significant flexibility in the financial scope of the initial project. While it is important and significant that we can share openly and listen respectfully, we need to continue moving beyond personal preference. Ultimately, our thinking will even need to move beyond "What is best for the whole Meeting?" to the question, "How are we led?"

We have several options available to us that have been raised recently:

- A significantly scaled-back version of the new building drawn by an architect a few years ago for our property on Rt. 79
- A building that closely resembles the new building drawn by the architect
- A pre-fabricated building delivered to our property on Rt. 79
- An existing building that we purchase

Perhaps there are more. In the same way that agreeing not to speculate about the sale of the Burt House simplifies our Meetinghouse discussions, taking other options off the table may also simplify our discussions. Which do we definitely want to pursue?

Whichever option(s) we pursue, we will need to talk about money. The January 2001 issue of the *Pastoral Care Newsletter* informs us that "...attitudes [about money] vary dramatically from person to person. This explains in part why money acts as such a flash point in many group decisions....Working through our differences gives us opportunities to know

each other better and to build friendships that transcend the need for similarity of beliefs." Specifically, we need to find out how we feel about the possibility of taking on debt. We will need some clarity about how much and in what way we are reasonably able to commit financially in order to have a Meeting home of our own.

I would like the Meeting to consider committing to an additional Meeting for Business or Called Meeting each month to focus on a Meetinghouse between now and June. Can we listen to that of God in each other with the intent of selecting one of the options above as well as a rough financial plan to support it by that time?

To counter the feelings many folks have that the process has already taken a very long time, I would like to suggest that between now and June, any information-gathering work be done not by committees, but by people who volunteer as individuals to do these

tasks and report back to us about the results: a "Committee of the Whole."

During the process of looking at the property on West Dryden Road, it seemed to be helpful to distill our thoughts and leadings and to distribute them in written form beforehand for the group to use in the process of discernment. I would like to continue to do this over the next several months. There will be an opportunity to discuss the questions raised in this document at the February 14 Meeting for Business.

Incidentally, the January 2007 issue of *Spark* <<http://www.nnym.org/spark/2007.1.shtml>> has more than a dozen articles about Meetinghouse experiences in New York Yearly Meeting. I recommend these highly.

Advices & Queries from NYM 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 12. Do we acknowledge the oneness of humanity and foster a loving spirit toward all people? Do we honor Friends' traditional testimony that men and women are equal? How do we work to make these ideals a reality?

Announcements

Four Friends in *The Little Prince* at Ithaca College

Four youth from our Meeting will be in *The Little Prince* at Ithaca College the last week of February and first week of March (dates below). Laurel Wolf, Sarah Saxon, Britta Goncarovs, and Elsa Mohlke are in this opera/musical version based on the 1943 book by Antoine de Saint-Exúpery and the tiny explorer from Astroid B612.

"It is only with the heart that one can see rightly; what is essential is invisible to the eye."

Wednesday February 24 8:00 Preview

Friday Feb. 26 8:00 Opening Night performance followed by reception

Sunday Feb. 28 2:00 Performance

Tuesday March 2 8:00 Performance

Thursday March 4 8:00 Performance

Saturday March 6 8:00 Performance

For information on buying tickets, call the Ithaca College ticket office (274-3224) or Ticket Center Ithaca (273-4497).

Spiritual Preparation for Meeting for Worship

Beginning in February, M&O will be asking a few people each First Day to spiritually prepare our space for worship.

Thomas Kelly wrote about the flow of prayerful listening to God through those who have been praying prior to the meeting.

Some individuals need already, upon entering the meeting to be gathered deep in the spirit of worship. There must be some kindled hearts when the meeting begins. In them, and from them, begins the work of worship. The spiritual devotion of a few persons, silently deep in active adoration, is needed to kindle the rest, to help those others who enter the service with tangled, harried, distraught thoughts to be melted and quieted and released and made pliant, ready for the work of God and His Real Presence.

If you are able to arrive 15 or 20 minutes before meeting to begin silent worship, please contact Carolyn Kenyon at <ckenyon@twcny.rr.com> or 273-7922... or simply come.

NY Yearly Meeting's Earthcare Working Group

The Earthcare Working Group, now under the care of Witness Coordinating Committee of New York Yearly Meeting, invites you to participate with us as we re-organize this working group. May we join together to meet the environmental crisis of our precious planet and to respond in unity in new directions for our Earth.

We know that Monthly Meetings are involved in this important work. How can we combine our resources to support and encourage one another? We want to share your ideas, your successes and trials, your stories with other Friends. We know that together we can accomplish more.

As Friends, we have a rich history of bringing about deeply needed social change. Let us rise to the call of our heritage. All are invited to join this committee. Let us know what your vision might be for our work together.

— Patricia Chernoff, Morningside Meeting, clerk
and Vitalah Simon, Purchase Meeting, assistant clerk
patriciachernoff@verizon.net and vitalah@verizon.net

Spark: Call for Submissions

The March 2010 Spark will be an open issue called "Quaker Potluck." If there was ever anything that you wanted to share with the community of Friends, now is your chance. Please send your submission to Helen Garay Toppins at office@nyym.org, or NYYM, 15 Rutherford Place, New York, NY 10003. Due date is February 7, 2010. Artwork welcome. Direct questions to my e-mail or call 212-673-5750.

Unleashing the Power of Community: Continuing the Dialogue on Racism

"Tolerance, Collaboration, and Commitment," a community forum, will be held Monday, February 1st from 6:30-8:30p at the Holiday Inn in downtown Ithaca.

It has been two years since the last major crisis and a community outcry for change. What progress has been made? What work still needs to be done?

Come hear about on-going efforts to promote equity, diversity, and tolerance. Come be inspired to create a community that is truly committed to equity and anti-racism. Community leaders will be there to listen. Let them hear your voice!

*The plague of racism is insidious, entering into our minds
assmoothly and quietly and invisibly as floating airborne microbes
enter into our bodies to find lifelong purchase in our bloodstreams.*

— Maya Angelou

Event Sponsors include the Ad Hoc Equity Committee, Ithaca City School District, Chamber of Commerce, Multicultural Resource Center, Cayuga Radio Group, TST BOCES, Greater Ithaca Activities Center, Ithaca Youth Bureau, Village at Ithaca, Human Services Coalition, United Way, Cornell University, Tompkins County Council of Governments (TCCOG), TC3, and CDRC.

For more information, contact Audrey J. Cooper at Cornell Cooperative Extension, ajc39@cornell.edu, 607-272-2292, ext. 135 or see <http://www.multicultural-resource.org>.

Upcoming Powell House weekends... with carpooling opportunities!

Powell House is the conference and retreat center of New York Yearly Meeting. Its mission is to foster the spiritual growth of Friends and others and to strengthen the application of Friends' testimonies in the world.

Ithaca Friends will be going to Powell House *three weekends* in February! Listed below are the conferences, and the person with whom you are welcome to carpool.

February 5-7 (Bronwyn Mohlke)

Adult weekend: Creativity & Spirituality

Youth weekend: On the Cusp with Cupid (8th and 9th grades)

February 12-14 (Gina Varrichio)

Family Fun, Quaker Parenting, & Children's Activities

February 26-28 (Mary Beth Tierney)

Adult weekend: Clerking with Arthur Larabee

Youth weekend: Snow Drifts (4th and 5th grades)

As for finances, here are some things to keep in mind: Powell House offers a "first timer" discount and a "butler" discount. In addition, both Powell House and Ithaca Monthly Meeting offer scholarships. Powell House also welcomes bartering deals: conference credit in exchange for services. (For example, a childcare provider during a recent adult conference asked to be paid in conference credit so that he could come to youth conferences!)

And if you are wondering about the distance and transportation issues, here are some things to keep in mind: There are often carpooling opportunities with local or regional Friends. Powell House staff is happy to assist you with carpooling opportunities; what a great way to make a new friend! Powell House welcomes non-Quaker attenders (youth as well as adult), so grab your non-Quaker buddies to share the trip and experience.

For more information, check out the Powell House website (www.powellhouse.org) or feel free to contact Mary Beth Tierney (277-7784).



Words to Consider from Meeting for Healing

To feel the grace of God in a painting of the dear, quiet commonness of a domestic interior, or in a landscape, cityscape, trains us to feel the grace of God in the thing itself in situ. Does the world need another painting of people quietly going about their lives? Does it need another story? Another poem? Yes. We as a people are generally rushing headlong through the decades of our lives without reflection. We keep an unwholesome pace. We don't stop to glory in the sheen of rainwater on a stone or on a child's cheek. It's an oft told tale. If a story or a painting or a poem can urge us toward more contemplative living by which we discover some truth, then, yes, that function of art justifies sacrifices incurred in the making of it, and is a worthy goal of any artist. As for understanding and conveying truth, that, in part, is the responsibility of the receiver.

— Susan Vreeland

Forest

by Thea Clarkberg (9 years old)

I step into the forest:

The squishy earth gives way beneath my toes.
Dotted with flowers, speckled with light,
thriving with underbrush to insects delight.

I lean against a tree:

Long thick roots curl into a strong gray trunk,
Graceful branches flutter into twigs in a natural way
That no photo or drawing can catch.
Twigs flick into leaves.
Leaves flutter and twist, like blinds on a window
Letting small slits of golden light drift through green lattice.

I look at the sky:

Soft shafts of golden light filter through leaves
Like spotlights on a stage.
Gray dots of dust float slowly down like snow.

I breath in:

Fresh wisps of air fill my lungs and I close my eyes.
I breathe in that smell of rotten leaves far off, and life —
pure life.

I open my ears

To this world of life and beauty.
I hear the sweet, sugary sound of angels voices echoing in birds
mouths.
I hear a soft baby's rattle in the leaves, muffled by the breeze.

Forest.

Meeting Friends



Toni Murdough (here pictured enjoying tea at Women's Fellowship) has been attending Ithaca Monthly Meeting for about 20 years. Raised Greek Orthodox, Toni was introduced to Quakerism through carpooling to work with Ithaca Friend Barbara Barry. Toni spent many years serving on CALM and currently serves on Program Committee with all the other Tony's of our Meeting (Gaenslen and Serviente).

**Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Corporation and of the January Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business
Ithaca Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends**

Steve Mohlke, Clerk
Tonia Saxon, Assistant Clerk
Marilyn Ray and Nancy Gabriel, Co-Recording Clerk
Mike Simkin, Treasurer

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

201001.1 Gathering

The Ithaca Monthly Meeting (IMM) of the Religious Society of Friends met on January 10, 2010, in the Cafe, Annabel Taylor Hall, Cornell University, for Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business. At 12:45 p.m., 35 Friends settled into worship.

201001.A. Ithaca Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends Corporation

Present: Kris Altucher, Marjorie Baines, Barbara Barry, Katherine Beissner, Tom Brown, Fell Cadwallader, Richard Crepeau, Esther Darlington, Chris Dunham, James Finlay, Blair Jennings, Melody Johnson, Carolyn Kenyon, Margaret McCasland, Roberta Merrill, Steve Mohlke, Melissa Mueller, Lynn Podhaski, Marilyn Ray, Elspeth Rhodin, Ellie Rosenberg, Heather Ruff, Sue Ruff, Antonia Saxon, Pat Sewell, Michael Simkin, Rebekah Tanner, Connie Thomas, Garry Thomas, Melissa Travis Dunham, Lynne Truame, Gina Varrichio, Erica Weiss, William White, and Alexia Yesukevich..

201001.A1. Reports from the Corporation:

Marilyn Ray, President of the Corporation and Clerk of the Board of Trustees, and William White, Secretary of the Corporation and of the Board of Trustees, presented the reports for the Board of Trustees.

Friends received the Trustees Reports. @

201001.A2. Treasurer's Report to the Corporation:

Mike Simkin presented the financial report for 2009. Liquid assets on December 31, 2009 were valued at \$300,474 and fixed assets at \$688,000. Our expenses for 2009 exceeded our income by about \$1,700.

Friends received the Treasurer's Report. @

This ended the annual meeting of the corporation.

201001.B. January 2008 Meeting for Business with Attention to Business of the Ithaca Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

201001.B1 Nominating Committee Report

Melody Johnson reported for Nominating Committee that two corrections had been made to the list of Committee Nominees for 2010 that was approved at the December 14, 2009 Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business and presented a minute to accept the changes.

APPROVED @

201001.B2. Change of Clerks

Tom Brown expressed his appreciation for the support he received as Clerk over the last three years as he worked on the Spiritual Life of the Meeting. He expressed special appreciation for the support to he received from Ministry and Oversight and also for the excellent communication he had with the Committees and the Working Group. Tom turned over the Clerkship to Steve Mohlke.

201001.B3. Annual Reports of the Committees of Ithaca Monthly Meeting:

Annual reports were received from and summarized for the following committees: Burt House; Children and the Life of Meeting; Earthcare; Finance; Hector Meetinghouse; Hospitality; Library; Ministry and Oversight; Peace Witness; Program; Route 79 Property; Social Justice; and Young Friends. The Meeting is grateful for the work and energy of the Committees and those who serve on them.

Rebekah Tanner added to the Ministry & Oversight report information that there is now a link on our web site to resources about Spiritual Types and materials about each type.

Friends received the reports. @

At 2:20 p.m., 30 Friends gathered in silent worship before adjourning. We will meet again for Worship with Attention to Business after the rise of Meeting on February 14, 2010.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn Ray, Co-Recording Clerk

February 2009 Calendar of Ithaca Monthly Meeting

Men's Fellowship

Wednesday, February 3, 8p

Friends are invited to join others for casual conversation on any topic at the Chapter House.

Faith & Practice Discussion

Sunday, February 7, 9:30a

Faith & Practice is a book which details the beliefs and practices of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) within the area served by a Yearly Meeting. New York Yearly Meeting's *Faith & Practice* is available on-line on <nyym.org>; hard copies are often available for purchase in the Edwards Room.

Please join us in Anabel Taylor Hall room 314 for some adult discussion time to consider sections of *Faith & Practice* and their relevance to our lives. Bring your *Faith & Practice* if you are able. For more information, contact Christianne White from Program Committee, 273-1567.

Floating Meeting... with Attention to Football

Sunday, February 7, 5p

Are you ready for some football? Gather with F/friends for the second annual Quaker Superbowl Party at Chris Dunham & Melissa Travis Dunham's house (105 Dunmore Place) starting at 5pm (the game starts around 6pm). Last year our Friendly 8s group watched the game together and had so much fun we decided to expand the event to the entire Meeting! The Big Game will be on TV, and F/friends can choose to pay attention to it, glance at it once in a while, or go in another room and play board games, knit, or talk. Never watched a football game (American style) and want to learn what it's all about? Now's your chance!

Pizza (vegan and vegetarian) and some beverages will be provided. Please bring other beverages or snacks to share (think finger food: chips & salsa, veggies and dip). Please RSVP by Thursday Feb 6 if you know you're coming or think you might come, so we know how much pizza fixings to acquire. If you need directions or have questions, contact Chris or Melissa at 277-9599, mtravis823@yahoo.com, or c_j_dunham@yahoo.com.

Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business

Sunday, February 14, Rise of Mtg

Agenda items should be provided to Steve Mohlke, our clerk, by Wednesday the February 10. (Please see page 1 of the newsletter for contact information.)

Every Sunday

- 11:00a **Meeting for Worship** for all ages (note: on October 4th, Meeting for Worship begins at 10:30a)
- 11:15a Children are invited to join **First Day School** classes gathering outside the Edwards Room

Peace Witness Committee

Saturday, February 27, 10:30a

Note that the Peace Witness Committee is meeting at a different day and time in February. We will meet at the Burt House. This is an open committee, so all are welcome to attend. Bring your thoughts on how we can best proceed in a time of war. If you cannot attend, but have ideas you wish to share, please contact Elizabeth Schneider at neschneid@aol.com, or at 273-3566.

Women's Fellowship

Friday, February 19, 6:30p

Sadly, the Smart Monkey Cafe closed its doors. We are going to try The Giving Tree—occupying the space formerly occupied by ABC Cafe at 310 Stewart Avenue—this month. All are welcome to join us and talk about whatever we darn well feel like talking about. Have dinner or dessert... or not.

Joyce Ajlouny of Ramallah Friends School

Tuesday, February 16, 7p

Joyce Ajlouny is in her sixth year as the director of the Ramallah Friends School (RFS), located in the West Bank/Palestine, about 15 miles north of Jerusalem. Joyce will speak about the important impact that the RFS has had on the community throughout its 140 year history as a leading school in the Middle East. She will also describe her personal challenges, as well as those of the RFS community of students and teachers, which result from living and working under a military occupation. Donations to RFS as well as Joyce's ministry account will be welcomed.

Meeting for Healing

Tuesday, February 23, 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.

Leading a Quaker Life

Friday, February 26, 6p

This month's Leading a Quaker Life session will feature Barbara Barry and others talking about their work in and supporting prison families. A light dish-to-pass supper begins at 6pm at the Burt House, and the program gets underway around 6:30 and ends by 8p or earlier. Questions can be addressed to Christianne White of Program Committee, to cmw84@cornell.edu

Other Weekly IMM Events

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