



Newsletter of the

Ithaca Monthly Meeting

of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

July 2010

IMM CONTACTS

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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 body of the message as simply:

join

Events:

To set up or schedule a program or presentation for the meeting, please see the instructions on the website.

Website: ithacamonthlymeeting.org

Newsletter Submissions Due July 29nd

Please provide your newsletter contributions to Rini Clarkberg:
150 Giles St., Ithaca, NY 14850
607-279-4722 • mec30@cornell.edu

Making a Meetinghouse: Friends Demolish Interior

In the month of June, dozens of Friends donned hard hats, work gloves, and face masks to gut the interior of the intended new meetinghouse on the corner of Third and Madison Streets. Men and women, young and old alike, have swung sledg-

es, pulled down ceilings, waded through mounds of debris, and hauled endless garbage cans to the dumpster. Thoughtful Friends have visited the work site bearing much-appreciated snacks and cold drinks.

"Meetinghouse" continued on page 2



Beth Jolles shows us how it's done.

Update from the Ad Hoc Working Group for Immigrant Support

The Ad Hoc Working Group for Immigrant Support gave its semi-annual report at the June 13 Business Meeting. There has been some heartening news on the employment and health front for Mu Mu and she was granted citizenship in April; Aseel Naser passed her driver's test; Dhia Waheed has been accepted for a Masters program at the University of Wisconsin; and the families' four children have been in much appreciated pre-K classes this past year. The Working

Group has worked fairly intensively with both families in a number of ways, and continued to channel the Meeting's donations and Third Sunday contributions to the two families through Catholic Charities' Immigrant Support Program. In the past year, for example, the Meeting has assisted with medical co-pays, some utility bills, and half of Mu Mu's and Eh Christ's citizenship applications.

"Immigrants" continued on page 2

Meetinghouse, continued from page 1

This volunteer demolition work has not only saved the Meeting thousands of dollars, it has also enhanced our sense of connection to the building and to one another.

Fundraising & Where We Stand

The Trustees of our meeting have set a fundraising goal of \$350,000 for this project. As of June 26th, pledges received put us more than three-quarters of the way to our goal. This is wonderful progress, but we are not done yet.

In the month of July, we expect to receive a better informed estimate from Latipac Builders on the cost of getting this building to a point where we are permitted to move in. Given financial constraints, Meeting may be faced with some significant decisions about how we can proceed.

If you haven't yet communicated your pledge information, please do so as soon as possible by contacting Mike Simkin, Treasurer (see "IMM Contacts" on page 1).



Karina and Drew chip away at a variety of old surfaces in what will become a bathroom.

Friends are reminded to visit the Ithaca Monthly Meeting website to read about meetinghouse progress and updates. For more photos of demolition, be sure to check

out the "Gallery" section of our website at:
ithacamonthlymeeting.org

—Rini Clarkberg

Immigrants, continued from page 1

As of May 1, however, Catholic Charities is no longer in a position to operate an Iraqi Family Fund (which, in fact, was only assisting the two Iraqi translator families in Ithaca, including that of Dhia Waheed and Aseel Naser). Instead, all contributions to their Immigrant Support Program are to go to a General Fund. Since the minute which established the Ad Hoc Working Group for Immigrant Support specifically mentioned assisting the Iraqi family, the Working Group asked the Business Meeting for approval for occasional transfers of money from the IMM Refugee

Fund to the General Fund of the Immigrant Services Program operated by Catholic Charities. This was approved.

The Business Meeting discussed a number of other Working Group proposals, as noted in the minutes of the Business Meeting. The full Ad Hoc Working Group for Immigrant Support Semi-Annual Report (June 2010) is available on line. For more information or if there are questions, feel free to contact Garry Thomas, convener, at thomasg@ithaca.edu.

Rise Up Singing: Volunteers Needed for September 18th Fundraiser for New Meetinghouse

Great news! Peter and Annie Patterson-Blood, editors of the popular "Rise Up Singing" singalong book, have volunteered to do a benefit concert to raise funds for our new Meetinghouse on Saturday, September 18 at 7pm.

Peter and Annie are great performers and have done many singalongs. They've led singing at FGC for many years, done workshops at Powell House and worked at Westtown. They also did a 6 month tour of all the Quaker meetings in New Zealand. They've given benefit concerts like this for several other meetings that were building or renovating, and are very enthusiastic about helping us out.

The concert will be in the dining room of the St Paul's Methodist church on the corner of Aurora and Court Streets. It seats 200, so let's fill it up!

To pull this off will take a lot of volunteers. Here are some of the tasks that will need doing. Many hands will make light work!

- **Publicity.** We all need to network and get this out to all our relevant mailing lists. We also have to approach this more systematically. Fortunately, we do have written instructions on the bases to cover. We need someone to coordinate.
- **Bake sale.** We can all contribute goodies and healthy snacks. We need a point person or group to arrange.

- **Silent Auction.** Everyone would be invited to contribute goods or services and the task group would set up the auction. Notes are available on the "how to."
- **Set up and take down.** There'll be tables, chairs, a sound system and other things

There's probably more task groups—but these are the biggies. This is a great way to let the wider Ithaca community know about our Meetinghouse and to enable community members to contribute to our effort. Let's make this a great concert and have lots of fun doing it!

Please contact Melody Johnson, 272-8755, to let her know how you can help.



Welcome Baby Boy Blake!

Melissa Mueller and Ernest Blake welcomed their son Wednesday, June 23, at 8:25 am at the Elmira. At press time, Melissa is out of the hospital and recovering well. The little fellow had a procedure to address a lung issue, and will stay for a few more days at the Arnot Ogden Medical Center to make sure all is well with him before he comes home.

Pool

- Thea Clarkberg

I pull my hands slowly through the water,
 And watch the bubbles flee to the top,
 Silver like stars in the night sky.
 I swim through the silent water,
 And bubbles tickle my face.
 I swat at the bubbles and I feel like a baby, a kitten.
 I press my feet on the bottom of the pool
 And I shoot to the surface for a breath of air.
 Chlorine smelling air fills my lungs
 And loud shouts of joy fill my ears.
 I blow out all my air and pick up my feet
 And I sink below the surface once again.
 I turn and look at the action around me.
 Legs kick and step, moving in graceful synchronism.
 Someone cannon balls in beside me
 And white, silver bubbles explode and frizz to the top.
 I float to the surface and my friends and I laugh
 together,
 Blue water quivering around us,
 Pool.

Broadening our Quaker Community: New York Yearly Meeting, Powell House and Silver Bay

Have you heard of Powell House? Located in Old Chatham, NY south of Albany, Powell House is the Quaker conference and retreat center of New York Yearly Meeting. Powell House offers workshop weekends for adults and children. Conferences generally start at dinner time on Friday and run through lunch on Sunday. A weekend at Powell House can be a wonderful, spiritually renewing retreat.

Have you heard of Silver Bay? Silver Bay is a YMCA-owned resort facility on Lake George where the annual meeting of New York Yearly Meeting is held each summer. "Summer Sessions" runs for an entire week. This year, it is the week of July 18th. The week at Silver Bay is an incredible opportunity to nourish your Quaker connections and to enjoy the splendor of the Adirondacks.

For more information on Silver Bay, visit <www.nyym.org/index.php?q=silverbay10>. It can be a challenge for newcomers to navigate the registration process (What *are* the housing options? What are these worship sharing groups?) so do not hesitate to ask for help figuring this out. Nancy Gabriel, our liaison to New York Yearly Meeting, or others who have attended before are happy to answer your questions.

And please do consider whether any of the following events at Powell House speak to you. If needed, Ithaca Monthly Meeting can make available some scholarship funds to make it possible for Friends to attend.

Powell House: On the Way to Silver Bay July 16–18, 2010

Last summer, several of us met on the weekend that NYYM's Summer Sessions began at Silver Bay. We had such a good time that we're doing it again—opening up Pitt Hall, the Anna Curtis Center, and the campground.

We'd love to see you, whether you're going on to Silver Bay or not. It will be a weekend filled with visiting, playing Ultimate Frisbee, blowing bubbles, singing, playing board games, quilting, swimming, and even doing work projects.

But...it will be more than that! It was 50 years ago this summer that Elsie Powell gave the 57 acres to New York Yearly Meeting—the beginning of Powell House as we know it. Come with stories to contribute to the oral history of Powell House and share PoHo games and songs from the 60s, 70s, and beyond.

Other Upcoming Events

- July 8-11 UnWinding: Grades 10th-12th
- Aug 6-8 Spiritual Healing—the Annual FIPSH weekend
- Aug 20-22 Feeding The Fire Series IV: Different Ways In
- Aug 26-29 In Jesus' Name: John Edminster, Planning Committee Clerk

The Religious Society of Friends: Excerpts from Wikipedia

The Religious Society of Friends, commonly known as the Quakers, was founded in England in the 17th century as a Christian religious denomination by people who were dissatisfied with the existing denominations and sects of Christianity. Historians generally credit George Fox with being the principal co-founder or most important early figure. The Society of Friends is counted among the historic peace churches. Society members are known as Quakers or Friends.

Unlike many other groups that emerged within Christianity, the Religious Society of Friends has tended away from creeds, and away from hierarchical structure.

The various branches have widely divergent beliefs and practices, but the central concept to most Friends is the "Inner Light". Accordingly, individual Quakers may develop individual religious beliefs arising from their personal conscience and revelation coming from "God within"; Quakers feel compelled to live by such individual religious beliefs and inner revelations.

Minutes of the June 13, 2010 Monthly 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 Clerks

Mike Simkin, 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 Clerk.)

201006.1 Gathering

Ithaca Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society Friends met for Monthly Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business in the Hector meetinghouse, June 13, 2010. At 12:15 PM, 19 Friends gathered and settled into silence. Clerk extended our appreciation to Elspeth Rhodin and Erica Weiss, who would be holding the Meeting in the Light. He then read passages from Pendle Hill Pamphlet #406, The Mind of Christ: Bill Taber on Meeting for Business, evoking the New Testament vision of a fellowship guided by the Spirit, open to the "Spirit's demands for sacrifice of time, treasure, convenience, and prejudice" and ready to receive the "covering" by which the Spirit's gifts come to us and sustain harmony. Clerk reviewed the revised agenda of the day's business.

201006.2 Proposed Meetinghouse Garden Committee

Gina Varricchio brought the background material and proposed charge for this new committee. Friends offered suggestions on the proposal. Meeting APPROVED formation of the committee, with a request that the committee clarify the parts of the charge referring to membership, leadership, and adult involvement. Friends invite the committee to report back on their activities and progress. @

Many Quakers feel their faith does not fit within traditional Christian categories of Catholic, Orthodox or Protestant, but is another way of experiencing God.

Although nearly all Quakers in previous centuries, and many today, recognize Quakerism as a Christian movement, a few Friends now consider themselves universalist, agnostic, atheist, secular humanist, postchristian, nontheist or Nontheist Friend, or do not accept any religious label. Calls for Quakerism to include non-Christians go back at least as far as 1870, but this phenomenon has become increasingly evident during the latter half of the 20th century and the opening years of the 21st century, and is still controversial among Friends.

Since Friends believe that each person has the ability to experience and respond to God, much of the Quaker perspective is based on trying to hear God and to allow God's Spirit free action in the heart. Isaac Pennington wrote in 1670: "It is not enough to hear of Christ, or read of Christ, but this is the thing — to feel him my root, my life, my foundation..."

201006.3 Earthcare Witness Committee

Margaret McCasland brought the revised Minute from EWC on Stewardship of Earth via Stewardship of Property:

Ithaca Monthly Meeting will use the general Quaker testimonies of Simplicity, Integrity, Peace, Community, and Equality as the basis for discerning how to be stewards of all property in our use &/or care.

This Minute was APPROVED. Accompanying the Minute, the Committee offered Queries and Advices for reflection on our actions in relation to the Minute.

In the context of these testimonies, we consider Queries and Advices such as the following:

1. As stewards of the earth as well as of our Meeting's resources, do we consider how our buildings should be constructed and operated?
2. Do we balance our use of energy with the needs of Planet Earth and of all beings?
3. Do we honor Community and Equality in relationship to the people who produce or install materials used in the building? In choosing building materials and furnishings, do we consider the health and safety of: the people and ecosystems where they are produced; the people who work on our buildings; and all who use the buildings?
4. Are we mindful of the "cradle-to-grave" costs of materials and furnishings? Do we seek reasonable opportunities to choose building materials that are "re-used", that are produced or restored locally, and/or that are produced and transported with a minimal amount of energy?
5. In weighing the costs and benefits of these many decisions, are we mindful of future generations and of the legacies and options we will be leaving to them?

Friends appreciated the opportunities for Meeting's use of the Queries and Advices, and expressed hope that ways will be found to continue to engage with them. @

201006.4 Trustees

Marilyn Ray brought the Trustees' report, which included information on their ongoing work and background for three proposed Minutes.

1. Trustees have become aware of the need to expand the Development Committee and recommend Chuck Mohler to be approved to serve on this committee. Trustees recommend Tony Serviente to fill the vacancy on the Project Management Committee. APPROVED

2. Trustees are authorized to use the Meetinghouse Fund to pay costs associated with the Design and Demolition phases of the work including: architectural and engineering fees, rental of a dumpster, rental or purchase of necessary gear for volunteers for the demolition (such as masks, gloves, overalls, etc.), a demolition consultant, and other similar related costs. APPROVED

3. To ensure proper review and approval of invoices, the Project Management Committee (PMC) will review and approve bills related to architectural design work, engineering, demolition, contractors, and any other expenses for which the PMC has direct oversight responsibility. The Treasurer will continue to have authority to pay bills for property taxes, property insurance and utilities, and other similar bills in consultation with Trustees as needed. The Trustees remain responsible for authorizing other expenditures related to the new meetinghouse or for delegating specific authority to another appropriate group. The Trustees are not presently granted authority to begin the Construction Phase of the renovation. APPROVED @

201006.5 Ministry and Worship.

Carolyn Kenyon presented three matters for the committee. 1) Nancy Hillegas has requested transfer of membership into IMM from Wilmington (DE) MM. Carolyn read parts of the Wilmington Clerk's letter of approval of the transfer. Ithaca Friends happily received the transfer of Nancy's membership. 2) M&W recommended, and Meeting APPROVED, the following people to serve on the requested Clearness Committee to labor with Rebekah Tanner on her leading toward healing ministry: Barbara Barry, Nancy Gabriel, Mary Beth Tierney. 3) In response to a request, M&W considered whether non-members may weigh in and be heard in the process of approving Minutes and other decision-making. M&W recommended affirming and continuing IMM's longstanding practice of including non-members as equal participants in the consideration of matters that come before Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business. Friends responded to some implications of this practice, exploring issues such as experience, trust, clarity, community, commitment, and practicality. Concern was expressed that Friends not lose sight of the meaning and importance of formal membership, and that non-members should be encouraged to consider the value of membership. Members and non-members present spoke to their efforts to understand the distinctions between being a member and an attender. In receiving the committee's report, meeting invited M&W to continue consideration of the meaning and value of membership. @

201006.6 Ad hoc Working Group on Refugee Support

Garry Thomas presented the group's semi-annual report, reviewing its history and work since it was created in 2007. In particular, IMM has supported two families, one from Iraq and one from Burma, often requiring dozens of hours per week from volunteers. The report also includes much good news of the families' progress in achieving stability. While gratefully acknowledging the fruitful cooperation with Catholic Charities, some changes in that relationship necessitate new Minutes to guide the Working Group's future activities. The following Minutes were APPROVED:

The Working Group recommends that:

1. IMM continue its relationship with Catholic Charities (CC), making occasional contributions to the General Fund of the CC's Immigrant Services Program.
2. Contingent upon Finance Committee approval, individuals who wish their gifts to be used specifically by refugee families with whom IMM has direct contact will be advised to make non tax-deductible contributions to a new fund to be established in IMM, the Refugee Assistance Fund (non-deductible contributions).
3. The third Sunday collections for the refugee fund will continue for another six months. Cash contributions will be deposited into the IMM non-deductible refugee fund.
4. The Ad hoc Working Group expand our friendship and support for the family of Hayder Assad and Masar Sattar, including direct assistance with finances when appropriate and feasible.

Meeting asked the Working Group to work with Finance Committee to season and clarify a recommendation about adding an IMM budget line for an annual gift to the General Fund of the CC's Immigrant Services Program. With this, Friends received the report. @

201005.7 Naming Committee

Tonia Saxon explained the role and composition of the Naming Committee, and brought its recommendation that Nancy Gabriel and Connie Thomas be named to serve three year terms on the Nominating Committee. APPROVED. @

201005.8 Clerk's business

Steve Mohlke recommended that two reports be received without discussion. The Project Management Committee report was distributed in hard copy and will be available electronically; the Treasurer's monthly financial report is ready and available from the Treasurer. Friends APPROVED receiving these reports in this way.

Twelve Friends settled into worship at 2:50 PM before adjourning. There will be an informational meeting on options for materials to be used in our renovations on June 20; our next Called Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business will be held on June 27.

*Respectfully Submitted,
Nancy Gabriel, Recording Clerk*

Advices & Queries from NYM Faith & Practice

Advice 10. Friends are advised to observe integrity in their living and to inspect frequently the state of their temporal affairs. In their dealings with everyone they should endeavor to maintain a truly Christian character, ever bearing in mind the Golden Rule, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

Advice 15. All are especially cautioned against any harshness of tone or manner when administering counsel or reproof, either privately or in meetings. Friends should speak truth with love, remembering that if they would do God's work, they must abide in God's love. Even a seeming harshness may check the beginnings of true repentance, and a lack of sympathy may cause harm where only good was intended.

Query 6. Do our children receive the loving care of the meeting? Does the influence of the meeting promote their religious life and give them an understanding of the principles and practices of Friends? Do we offer our young people opportunities for fellowship, for service, for religious instruction, and for participation in the life of the meeting?

Query 7. Do our vocations provide constructive and beneficial service? Do we observe integrity in our business transactions? Do we avoid involving ourselves beyond our ability to manage? Are we careful to conduct our affairs punctually, justly, and honorably? Do we avoid participation in lotteries, betting, and gambling?

July 2010 Calendar of Ithaca Monthly Meeting

Please also see the on-line calendar at <http://ithacamonthlymeeting.org/calendar/>

Bible Study at Beloved Community House Tuesday, June 29, 7p

Anna Obermeyer is affiliated with the Young Friends in Residence (YFIR) program hosted by Perry City Meeting. She invites all to Beloved Community House (599 Trumbulls Corners Rd, Newfield) for Bible study with snacks and drinks. This month, the group is reading the Letter of James all the way through; please look it over before you come, but as always keep an open mind!

Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business Sunday, July 11, Rise of Meeting

Agenda items should be provided to Steve Mohlke, clerk, by the preceding Wednesday. (Contact information is on page 1.)

Women's Fellowship Friday, July 16, 7p

Please join us at 7pm in the space formerly occupied by ABC Cafe at 310 Stewart Avenue. All are welcome. Have dinner or tea or baked goods... or not.

Peace Witness Committee Saturday, July 24, 10:30a

Peace Witness Committee meets in the Burt House. This is an open committee and all are welcome. You can stop in and bring any thoughts or ideas you may have, or just come by and find out what we are doing as a Committee. Please feel free to contact Elizabeth Schneider at 273-3566 or neschneid@aol.com.

Called Meeting for Meetinghouse Issues Tuesday, July 27, 7p

Meeting at the Burt House. Agenda items should be provided to Steve Mohlke, clerk, by the preceding Wednesday. (Contact information is on page 1.)

Every Sunday

- 10:30a **Meeting for Worship** for all ages
- 10:45a Children are invited to enjoy the outdoors behind the Hector Meetinghouse. Adult supervision provided.

Other Weekly IMM Events

- 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