



Newsletter of the

# Ithaca Monthly Meeting

of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

October 2015

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### Listserv:

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

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with message body as simply: join

### Marilyn's List:

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## Welcome to A New School Year at Ithaca Monthly Meeting

### Important Information for Parents and Caregivers

— *Melissa Blake, on behalf of Children and the Life of the Meeting (CALM)*

On Sunday, October 4th, our First Day School program for the new year will begin. Once again we will have three groups, divided by age: child care provided by Cierra for our youngest attenders, weekly First Day School with various teachers (see below) for elementary-aged children, and Power Quakers every two weeks with Janis Kelly for 7th through 12th grades. We hope many young people will join us October 4th because the First Day School program will involve a special “welcome back” ceremony in the Meeting Room, immediately following silent worship.

That same day will be the first day of a new (or old, if you’ve been around long enough) way of including young people in Meeting for Worship. Rather than having our young people with us in Meeting for the first 15 minutes as we’ve done for the past several years, we are going to have them join us for the last 15 minutes, when they are more likely to experience a “gathered meeting” and vocal ministry. The Children and the Life of the Meeting (CALM) committee believes this is an essential ingredient in their religious education. How can one learn what a Quaker is or know whether one is a Quaker without experienc-

*School, continued on page 2*

## IMM - NYYM - FUM

At the September meeting for worship with attention to business we considered our place in the wider Society of Friends. The timing of our discussion is prompted by a minute from Brooklyn meeting that is expected to be on the agenda at New York Yearly Meeting Fall Sessions in November. The matter is complex. Most of what follows was first circulated with the agenda for September. At the end, there are some queries that we expect to use to continue our discussion and discernment at this month’s business meeting.

Ithaca Monthly Meeting, along with other monthly meetings in New York, western Connecticut and northern New Jersey, is part of New York Yearly Meeting (NYYM). New York Yearly Meeting is part of two larger bodies: Friends General Conference (FGC) and Friends United Meeting (FUM). (This is a result of the reconciliation of the Hicksite and Orthodox branches of NYYM in 1955.) New York Yearly Meeting makes an annual donation to both Friends General Conference and Friends United Meeting.

FGC is well-known to Ithaca Friends. Many have attended its summer conferences. Its perspective tends to be more liberal and more socially progressive.

FUM is perhaps less familiar. Its perspective encompasses a broader spectrum, ranging from Liberal to Evangelical, with many FUM Friends being more socially conservative. But it is FUM that brings us into fellowship with most international Quaker yearly meetings, including Quaker meetings in East Africa (there are more Quakers in Africa than in the U.S.), the Caribbean, including Cuba, Jamaica and Belize, and Ramallah, Palestine. FUM works for nonviolence and against war and poverty everywhere it operates. Through

*FUM, continued on page 3*

*School, continued from page 1*

ing either that deep, mystical silence or the Spirit speaking through others?

It is CALM's hope that this new arrangement will address the goal of making Meeting for Worship more multi-generational, and make Meeting for Worship richer for everyone in our community. At the September Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business, the Meeting affirmed that ALL young people are welcome in Meeting for Worship, from gurgling babies to restless children and beyond. In so doing we have made the religious and spiritual education of our young people a priority, which is wise because they are an important part of the future of our Society! It is also supportive of our families to affirm that parents do not need to leave the Meeting Room just because their children are not perfectly silent or still. In fact, we hope that the new timing of First Day School will be especially supportive of parents, because they will settle their children in upstairs before Meeting begins and then not have to leave the Meeting Room again until the Rise of Meeting.

To make this work, we ask that parents bring their children to the teachers and child care person upstairs in the Activity ( or "Snake") Room at 10:20am. This will give them a chance to meet the teachers and pass on any important information and still be seated in the Meeting Room as Friends are settling into silence. From 10:20 to 10:30 we are going to start something new in the Activity Room: singing! Various members of the CALM committee will lead singing with all the young people

while parents chat with First Day School teachers and Cierra. We will transition into the week's First Day School Program at 10:30.

Towards the end of First Day School, teachers will lead young people in preparing for Meeting For Worship. This may take many forms and involve visualization, discussion, practice, and more. In this way the First Day School participants will transition into being ready to enter the Meeting Room at 11:15. Once there, they need to know two things from their parent or caregiver: are they to sit with their parents or find their own seats; and are they to stay in the Meeting Room all the way through Announcements until the Rise of Meeting, or may they leave after the First Day School gives its report and head back upstairs, where CALM will provide supervision again until 12:15?

The CALM committee is excited to be implementing these changes on an experimental basis through the end of the calendar year. We feel energized by the switch and look forward to seeing what the fruits of it turn out to be. We are also excited about the theme for this year's elementary-age group: Compassion in Action. Four teachers are returning from last year: Fred Horan, Sarah Saxon, Melissa Blake, and Ellie Rosenberg. Francis Vanek is rejoining us after a couple of years off. Each of these Friends will take turns being our "lead teacher". And Ed Lisbe will be our permanent "assistant teacher". Welcome back to all of them, too!

## Coordinating FSRM Spring Gathering 2016

It is Ithaca Monthly Meeting's turn, together with Elmira MM, to coordinate Farmington Scipio Regional Meeting's Spring Gathering 2016, May 13-15, at Watson Homestead. This includes bringing ideas for the gathering's plenary session on Saturday morning to FSRM's Winter Gathering (January 16 at Rochester MM). What is stirring in you? in IMM? in FSRM? What might we do or who might we hear from to help us live more deeply in Spirit as individuals and as a body? Please share your stirrings with Shirley Way, Marilyn Ray or Bronwyn Mohlke.

## Live at the Burt House

Interested in living at the Burt House Friends Center, our meeting property off the Cornell campus? The Burt House is accepting applications for residency. If you are inclined to live in community with other people and enjoy quiet surroundings, this may interest you. We seek people who (1) have some background with Quakers, although membership in a Quaker Meeting is not required, and (2) have particular interest in joining a small intentional community that lives in a Quaker house and in a manner consistent with Quaker teachings. An application and an interview are required, but no lease is involved. For further information or to express interest, please contact the Burt House Caretakers, Violet Goncarovs and Brian Parks at [BurtHouse@ithacamonthlymeeting.org](mailto:BurtHouse@ithacamonthlymeeting.org).

## Apples Abound

Friends, the Murphy family has apples aplenty at the 78 Genung Circle home. Come, enjoy the picking. Please call ahead, 607-272-4526 or [liamgbmurphy@verizon.net](mailto:liamgbmurphy@verizon.net).

— *Liam Murphy*



If one wouldst be a healing person,  
withdraw to the inner springs of silence.  
Let all that you do  
rise up in that silence,  
which informs and blesses your work.  
This silence is not only of worship;  
rather, it is the source of all movement,  
an infilling silence  
out of which your work is directed.  
In this sense, you can rest in your work  
for it is carried in God  
out of the silence in which you move . . .

— *Sparrow*

FUM in Africa, for example, Quakers run schools, orphanages, and hospitals, and sponsor A.V.P programs in areas where war and violence are ongoing.

Since 1988, FUM has had an employee policy that promotes equal rights for all regardless of sexual orientation, but asserts that “sexual intercourse should be confined to the bonds of marriage, which we understand to be between one man and one woman.” FUM limits employment to those who agree to this policy. The policy could be viewed as a compromise between two opposing views. It is certainly objectionable to liberal Friends, whose commitment to marriage equality is now largely unquestioned. But it is also objectionable to conservative Friends, especially in Africa, who view homosexuality as anathema, forbidden by scripture, not something that can be condoned in any way.

New York Yearly Meeting has long labored with its association with FUM and with this policy in particular. The history of its relations with FUM are complex enough to justify their own web page of history. Within that page is a statement written by Christopher Sammond, General Secretary of NYYM, who is one of our representatives to FUM and who wrote the statement after attending a joint meeting with the African FUM board in Kenya in 2007.

This spring, Brooklyn Monthly Meeting approved a MINUTE calling on NYYM to withhold its donation to Friends United Meeting as a way of registering its displeasure with FUM’s employment policy. Brooklyn Monthly Meeting is part of New York Quarterly Meeting, which has approved Brooklyn’s minute. The Nurture Coordinating Committee of New York Yearly Meeting has written a response to Brooklyn Monthly Meeting.

While New York Yearly Meeting hasn’t yet asked all other monthly meetings to respond to this call as they are led, one of Ithaca Monthly Meeting’s New York Yearly Meeting representatives, Steve Mohlke, believes that such a request will probably come in the near future. He asks us to enter

into the beginnings of discernment in regard to this question.

We cannot in one Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business resolve a question which has been developing for decades. But this is a chance to begin to listen in the Spirit to how we understand the conflict and what it represents to us.

We ask that Friends please prepare by reading:

1. “A Timeline of Crisis Points for Friends United Meeting, Its Personnel Policy, and Its Theological Diversity: 1988–2008,” the New York Yearly Meeting’s review of its relation with FUM [http://www.nyym.org/?q=fum\\_crisis\\_points](http://www.nyym.org/?q=fum_crisis_points)
2. Christopher Sammond’s 2007 statement, which is linked to within that review <http://www.nyym.org/pubs/FUMRepsReport0704.pdf>
3. the minute approved by Brooklyn Monthly Meeting, (see below)

### Brooklyn’s Minute, 2015.02.17

Brooklyn Monthly Meeting urges that New York Yearly Meeting (“NYYM”) Follow the example of Canadian Yearly Meeting and draft a letter to Friends United Meeting (“FUM”) expressing displeasure at its current discrimination against LGBT Quakers in paid and unpaid positions of service or leadership. The letter to further state that until such time as such policies are laid aside and equally embraced for all Quakers, it will only designate its payments to FUM for specific projects, such projects which in the opinion of New York Yearly Meeting are worthy enough to exceed the damage to Equality and human dignity done by FUM’s discriminatory personnel policies.

At such time that New York Yearly Meeting undertakes such designation of its payments to FUM, Brooklyn Monthly Meeting will cease its present withholding of a portion of its Covenant Donation to NYYM in protest of FUM’s discriminatory personnel policies.

## Queries for Us

What does it really mean to be in partnership with Africans? How do we balance the needs for water, healthcare, AIDS ministry, and education with the homophobia and fundamentalism present among many African Friends?

How can we walk with Friends with whom we have much in common and also with whom we differ on some items that are very important to us? What are we called to do when faced with one another’s pain and different ways of understanding faithfulness?

While the Richmond Declaration is the historic foundation of FUM and is as precious to many as the writings of John Woolman to NYYM Friends, it is probably not a document that most of us are familiar with let alone something that most of us can affirm. Are we clear that our attitudes toward the Richmond Declaration are not a barrier to our affiliation with FUM?

In FUM, as in much of the Quaker world including our own yearly meeting, the Orthodox/Hicksite split has never been truly resolved. What does this lack of resolution mean to us at this time? What work might it call us to?

How do we as NYYM understand our own differences in theology that undergird our different understandings of gender?

Based on what we saw in Africa, the personnel policy of FUM will not be changing in the near future. Given that reality, how do we as a YM minister to the needs of Friends, both within and without our YM, who find FUM’s policy painful and unacceptable?

— Steve Mohlke & Antonia Saxon

## What Does AVP Mean to You?

The Alternatives to Violence Program facilitators for Elmira Correctional Facility in our meeting (Kathleen Gale, Gina Varrichio, and Susan Wolf) recently did a presentation about the AVP program for Area Congregations Together (ACT). We asked some of our “inside facilitators,” or members of our facilitation team that are presently incarcerated, to write up what they wanted to say to the community about AVP, since they were unable to join us for the presentation. Each month, we plan to share one of these pieces with IMM, to help Friends get a feel for the program and the people IMM helps to support, fiscally and spiritually.

## What is Prison and AVP by Victorious Victor

A prison is a place where lives are cut short, and hopes and dreams die. For to glance into the future yields nothing but the negative. A place that turns the young, the inexperienced, and the weak into criminals, the criminals into better criminals. A place where the law as it is written becomes twisted, bent, and adulterated to suit the purpose of those elected to enforce it. A place where the average working person, the poor, the underprivileged, and the unwanted serve years and years for minor crimes, while the rich, the politicians, the prison administrators and their hired lackeys steal millions seemingly with the blessings of the state. A place that does not exist to the outside world, for people cannot find it on a map, drive to it in a car, connect to it by telephone, or reach it by mail.

A place where outgoing letters seem to fall into a “black hole,” never to be heard from again. For once inside these walls you become dead to the outside world. A place where parents and grandparents pass away, wives and girlfriends move on, and your children begin to call someone else “Daddy.” A place where sisters, brothers, nieces, nephews, aunts and uncles all forget that you’re part of the family. A place where you find out who your real friends are. A place where all good things you have ever done are forgotten and only the bad remembered.

A place filled with thieves, whores, crackheads, drug dealers and other assorted

crooks, some of which “wear blue.” A place that festers anger, hate racism, and hopelessness. A place where men and women are warehoused like so many cattle. A place where positive actions, and even positive thoughts, are discouraged, and where rehabilitation is non-existent. A place where you leave worse off than when you arrived, with only a \$40 check, a bus ticket, a suit of cheap clothes, and no hope for the future. That, folks, is what prison really is.

But the Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) is a multi-cultural volunteer organization that is dedicated to reducing interpersonal violence in our society. Its workshop presents conflict-management skills that can enable individuals to build successful interpersonal interactions, gain insights into themselves, and find new and positive approaches to their lives. These experiential workshops empower people to lead nonviolent lives through affirmation, respect for all, community-building, cooperation, and trust.

Every workshop is a journey, and no two journeys are alike. For the traveler, every journey is a life experience and no two travelers are alike, nor will they experience the same journey in the same way. A workshop group is like a tour group: each one is as unique as the individual travelers who compose it. You can write me and ask any questions you may have about my journey at any time. Because AVP has worked for me! As a facilitator for many years, I had the opportunity to improve my leadership skills, and get new insights about myself, about other people and about a non-violent life. It is about community, about acknowledging and encouraging the potential of all of us to grow and develop. It’s about working together by agreement and without coercion, and discovering positive new ways of dealing with conflict non-violently.

Alternatives to Violence Project is about respect for yourself and others. True respect means reaching for what looks for truth and justice in yourself, building on it, strengthening it, reaching for it in others, and helping them to do the same.

— Victor Pulecio #90 A 6897  
Elmira Correctional Facility, PO Box 500,  
Elmira, NY 14902-0500

## October in IMM History

### 10 Years Ago (October 10, 2005)

A memorial minute for Edith Edgerton was read and approved.

M&O (now Ministry & Worship) read a statement of concern about the need to strengthen the religious basis of our Meeting for Business. It indicated that those who attend Business Meeting should be cognizant that their prior attendance at Meeting for Worship would add depth to their contribution to Business Meeting.

A discussion of the impression and experiences of the Eyes Wide Open events of the weekend (an AFSC anti-war exhibit focusing on the war in Iraq) took place. Friends rejoiced in a message recognizing the vision and spiritual depth of Wilma Brown in bringing the event to our community.

### 25 Years Ago (October 8, 1990)

Carolyn Kenyon and Chuck Mohler were welcomed into membership of IMM and Ariel Mohler was welcomed as an associate member.

### 60 Years Ago (October 10, 1955)

Albert Johnson reported that he had completed all of the paperwork for the DP (displaced persons) families (from Europe) that Meeting wishes to aid. He then read a letter from AFSC indicating their appreciation for IMM’s sponsorship.

### 70 Years Ago (October 8, 1945)

Sarah Wray indicated that Elmira Friends, the only other Fellowship Meeting in this part of the state (both Elmira and IMM became Monthly Meetings through the Fellowship Council of AFSC), would like to see a closer fellowship with IMM. IMM approved this and suggested that we might plan two joint Meetings per year, one in Ithaca and one in Elmira. Further details would be worked out later.

### 75 Years Ago (October 9, 1940)

IMM misses Edward and Ruth Miller, who are on a year’s leave of absence. Joshua Cope visited them recently in Cooperstown, conveyed their greetings, and described their plans for the Civilian Public Service work camp they are starting in cooperation with AFSC and the NYS Conservation Department.

— Tom Brown, Meeting Historian

## Earthcare Witness Proposing a Minute

The Earthcare Witness Committee will be bringing a minute to Meeting for Business in October asking IMM to approve our signing on to a statement on the challenge of climate change originated by three “wider Quaker bodies,” QUNO, QEW and FCNL. Below is an abbreviated version of a cover letter from QUNO which has been circulated to Monthly Meetings around the world, followed by the statement.

### Cover Letter

Dear Friends worldwide,

The Statement below was developed by Quaker Earthcare Witness, the Quaker United Nations Office, and Friends Committee on National Legislation for their joint presence at events during the UN Climate Summit in September 2014 [over a year ago].

A number of fellow Quaker organizations wished to add their name, including FWCC, which sent the Statement out to Quaker communities worldwide. As a result, we continue to receive signatures which we add to the Statement, uploading the most recent versions onto the QEW, FCNL and QUNO websites.

The Statement was originally written as a ‘witness’ of our role in anthropogenic climate change. Its aim was to inspire personal and community action; it was not meant to define a universal action, since the situation of Quakers worldwide is not universal. [ . . . ]

The attached Statement was revised in January 2015 to reflect the following concerns: that it have longer life by being non-date specific to continue its relevance, and that the language be less anthropocentric and more strongly acknowledge the grave dangers we face from climate change. It was revised in August 2015, to add the word ‘anthropogenic’ in clarifying the statement relating greenhouse gas emissions to the combustion of fossil fuels on the second page.

We have attempted to do this, while holding to the core message that Quaker organizations and Meetings have already upheld and signed. [ . . . ]

*In peace and with gratitude,*

*QEW, QUNO and FCNL, August 2015*

### Statement: Facing the Challenge of Climate Change

IMM Earthcare Witness would like our members and attenders to consider whether we IMM should also add our name to the shared statement of Quaker groups, of January 2015

*“It would go a long way to caution and direct people in their use of the world, that they were better studied and knowing in the Creation of it. For how could [they] find the confidence to abuse it, while they should see the great Creator stare them in the face, in all and every part of it?”*

*— William Penn, 1693*

As Quakers, we are called to work for the peaceable Kingdom of God on the whole Earth, in right sharing with all peoples. We recognize a moral duty to cherish Creation for future generations.

We call on our leaders to make the radical decisions needed to create a fair, sufficient and effective international climate change agreement.

As Quakers, we understand anthropogenic climate change (climate change due to human activities) to be a symptom of a greater challenge: how to live sustainably and justly on this Earth.

We recognize that the current rise of greenhouse gas emissions is leading to an unprecedented rate of increase in global average surface temperature of extreme detriment to the Earth’s ecosystems and species, including human beings.

We recognize that catastrophic global climate change is not inevitable if we choose to act urgently.

We recognize a personal and collective responsibility to ensure that the poorest and most vulnerable peoples now, and all our future generations, do not suffer as a consequence of our actions. We see this as a call to conscience.

We recognize the connections between climate change and global economic injustice as well as unprecedented levels of consumption, and question assumptions of unlimited material growth on a planet with limited natural resources.

We recognize that most anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions are created by fossil fuel combustion. We recognize that our increasing population continues to pursue fossil fuel dependent economic growth. We recognize that the Earth holds more fossil fuel reserves than are safe to burn, and that the vast majority of fossil fuel reserves must remain in the ground if we are to prevent the catastrophic consequences of climate change. We therefore question profoundly the continued investment in, and subsidizing of, fossil fuel extraction.

We seek to nurture a global human society that prioritizes the well-being of people over profit, and lives in right relationship with our Earth; a peaceful world with fulfilling employment, clean air and water, renewable energy, and healthy thriving communities and ecosystems.

As members of this beautiful human family, we seek meaningful commitments from our leaders and ourselves, to address climate change for our shared future, the Earth and all species, and the generations to come. We see this Earth as a stunning gift that supports life. It is our only home. Let us care for it together.

Signed by several wider Quaker bodies, yearly meetings from around the world (including NYYM) and many Monthly Meetings.

## Beloved Community Discussion, October 18

Friends and attenders are invited to join in a conversation led by Karen Friedeborn about times we have witnessed the beloved community: when boundaries of our separateness are melted down and we feel unity with the spirit and each other.

Many of us have experienced moments when we felt in complete communion and solidarity with others in the presence of the spirit. Was it in a time of crisis and shared pain? Or when we have experienced unconditional love and belonging? Or when we recognize each other across all differences, and when we accept our need for as much help, or more, as we offer? Or was it when experiencing unexpected compassion from a stranger? During a gathered meeting? When sharing song? When facing danger in a direct action? When witnessing a miracle of nature together?

Understanding what conditions bring about this unity will help us live our faith together and create the beloved community in our day-to-day lives.

*But the end is reconciliation; the end is redemption; the end is the creation of the beloved community. It is this type of spirit and this type of love that can transform opposers into friends. The type of love that I stress here is not eros, a sort of esthetic or romantic love; not philia, a sort of reciprocal love between personal friends; but it is agape which is understanding goodwill for all men. It is an overflowing love which seeks nothing in return. It is the love of God working in the lives of men. This is the love that may well be the salvation of our civilization.*

— Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr from “*The Role of the Church in Facing the Nation’s Chief Moral Dilemma*,” 1957

Please join us before meeting for worship on October 18th, 9am to share how we have experienced the beloved community in our lives and to explore the conditions that exist to create this connection.

— Program Committee

## White Privilege Conference, April 2016

Save the date! The White Privilege Conference (WPC) is coming to Philadelphia April 14-17 2016. Friends General Conference is the organizing host, and several Yearly Meetings are co-hosting (BYM, PYM, and NYYM, perhaps others) as well as Quaker schools and other community organizations. This conference is celebrated as an extraordinary event. If we can get a group together from our Meeting, we can qualify for group rates and travel together. Youth are especially encouraged to attend, and there are separate conference events for youth. You can go to the WPC website ([www.whiteprivilegeconference.com](http://www.whiteprivilegeconference.com)) for more detailed information. More news to follow. If you are interested, please contact Susan Wolf, [QuakerWolf@gmail.com](mailto:QuakerWolf@gmail.com).

— Susan Wolf

## Waging Peace Discussion, October 20

David Hartsough, a long time Quaker, will be at the Third St. Meetinghouse on Tuesday, October 20, 2015 at 7pm, to talk about his experiences recounted in his recent autobiography, *Waging Peace: Global Adventures of a Life Long Activist*. He will share stories of from his life and invite us into reflecting on our own lives. Ruth Yarrow has known David for many years and highly recommends this program. Copies of David’s book are available in our library. Child care will be available upon request.

David Hartsough knows how to get in the way. He has used his body to block Navy ships headed for Vietnam and trains loaded with munitions on their way to El Salvador and Nicaragua. He has crossed borders to meet “the enemy” in East Berlin, Castro’s Cuba, and present-day Iran. He has marched with mothers confronting a violent regime in Guatemala and stood with refugees threatened by death squads in the Philippines.

*Waging Peace* is a testament to the difference one person can make. Hartsough’s stories inspire, educate, and encourage readers to find ways to work for a more just and peaceful world.

Inspired by the examples of Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr., Hartsough has spent his life experimenting with the power of active nonviolence. It is the story of one man’s effort to live as though we were all brothers and sisters.

— Nancy Riffer, Program Committee

## Carbon Offsets Helps Protect Climate Systems

Offsets are actions that help reduce the level of greenhouse gases in Earth’s atmosphere. They are often referred to as “carbon offsets” because the two most important heat-trapping gases released by human activities, carbon dioxide and methane, are both carbon-based.

Carbon offsets are the middle step in your transition to a ‘carbon neutral’ life. A household or an organization is “carbon neutral” when it has taken direct or indirect actions that remove as many heat-trapping gases from the atmosphere as their activities release.

First, take *direct* steps to reduce your use of fossil fuels and to store carbon in ecosystems: drive less, weatherize buildings, generate or purchase solar electricity, etc. You can also plant trees and protect local ecosystems.

Then take *indirect* steps that help others release less heat-trapping gases and protect carbon-storing ecosystems. This is where offsets come in. Use them to balance or “offset” those fossil fuels you can’t yet avoid using.

Finally, advocate for public policies that accelerate our transition to fossil-free energy sources.

— Margaret McCasland

**Ithaca Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends**  
**Monthly Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business, September 13 2015**

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Clerk: Antonia Saxon

Assistant Clerks: Marilyn Ray, John Lewis

Recording Clerks: Marin Clarkberg, Blair Jennings

(The @ signifies that the minute has been read and approved during Meeting. Copies of all written reports are on file with and available from the Clerk or Recording Clerk.)

**2015 9.1 Gathering**

Ithaca Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends met in Monthly Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business on September 13, 2015. At 12:25 pm, twenty-two Friends gathered and settled into worship. Clerk recognized Gary Rith, who was holding the Meeting in the Light.

Clerk shared from Patricia Loring's *Listening Spirituality, vol. II:*

*A man who had worked successfully for many years acquired a fortune. He finally felt he had riches enough to put aside time for something different that he had long wanted to do. Accustomed to being able to afford and command the best, he sought out the person who had the greatest reputation for his knowledge of jade. He offered him as much money as he wanted to teach him about the stone and the work done in it.*

*After much persuasion, the connoisseur finally agreed. The two arranged that the wealthy man would come one night a week for an indefinite period to learn about jade. When the wealthy man arrived for the first meeting, the connoisseur took his coat and hat, led him to a room unfurnished except for a table, a chair, a lamp, and a small silk pouch—and left him.*

*When the millionaire opened the pouch, there was a stone inside that he knew must be jade. To his surprise, he was left alone on the room with the stone for a long time. When the connoisseur finally returned, he brought the man's coat and hat, put the stone back into the pouch and escorted his student to the door, bidding him farewell until the next week.*

*The next week, the student of jade was treated in the same way except that the stone was a different one. And so it went on for some time. Often he would not even see the connoisseur, but would be admitted and escorted out by a servant, always left alone in the room with a different stone.*

*At last the millionaire could contain his outrage at this treatment no longer. As he left one evening, he complained to the connoisseur, "I am paying you a very large sum of money for instruction in jade; and you have barely spoken a word to me in all this time, much less taught me about the types of jade, the ways of working it, the various artistic traditions and periods. Now, to cap the whole fraud, the stone you gave me tonight wasn't even jade!" The connoisseur just smiled—and finally the wealthy man understood that learning jade was not a matter of a course of instruction or cognitive understanding.*

*Earlier Friends often spoke of "feeling after" Truth, which is analogous to the above secular example of developing "an intuitive feel" for some kind of object, situation or work. It is a non-inductive kind of knowledge born of intimate experience...[T] discernment that we hope to develop or be granted as a gift is a*

*feel for what is pleasing to God. As an analog to the aesthete's ear or eye, we hope to develop an ability to sense the sacred or secular origins of diverse things. As an analog to the connoisseurship of jade, we long to know the real thing when we confront it. This sense seems to be a gift that comes of disciplined faithfulness in our relationship with God. That happens only out of a long, intuitive acquaintance with the Divine in prayer and worship.*

**2015 9.2 New York Yearly Meeting and Its Relationship with Friends United Meeting**

In preparation for today's Meeting, Friends were asked to read two documents relating to Friends United Meeting (FUM), the relationship of FUM to African Quakers and service work in east Africa, and the history of FUM's personnel policy that is discriminatory against LGBT Friends.

Steve Mohlke apprised Friends on developments within our yearly meeting regarding NYYM's relationship to FUM. Friends were reminded that NYYM has membership in and provides a donation to both Friends General Conference (FGC), which tends to be socially progressive, and FUM, which includes some more Christocentric sectors of Quakerism, tends to be relatively socially conservative, and has a large, missionary-based service presence in Africa and around the world.

For several years, New York Yearly Meeting has labored with its association with FUM. In 1988, FUM adopted a personnel policy that recognizes "diversity among us on issues of sexuality" but continues: "we affirm our traditional testimony that sexual intercourse should be confined to the bonds of marriage, which we understand to be between one man and one woman." Paid and unpaid positions of service or leadership within FUM are limited to those who will agree to this policy. The policy was reaffirmed in an emotional FUM General Board Meeting held in Kenya in 2007.

This spring, Brooklyn Monthly Meeting approved a minute that Steve read that calls on NYYM to withhold its donation to FUM as a way of registering its displeasure with FUM's discrimination against LGBT Quakers. The gesture is symbolic if not a substantive decrement to the FUM overall budget. New York Quarterly Meeting has approved Brooklyn's Minute, and it will now proceed to be considered by New York Yearly Meeting.

Steve noted that NYYM hasn't yet asked other monthly meetings to respond. The clerk suggested that we use the time today to share information as a beginning to a more extensive discernment process, and continue our group discernment process in October.

Friends asked and answered questions about the nature of FUM, the theological contours of Quakerism worldwide, and NYYM's relationship to FUM. Friends emphasized that FUM is not an external organization; for NYYM, FUM is us. Friends were invited to consider the queries posed in Christopher Sammond's 2007 "Report on Friends United Meeting from the NYYM Representatives" in preparation for our next gathering on this topic. Friends asked that the queries be included in the next newsletter. @

*Continued on page 8*

### 2015 9.3 Children and the Life of the Meeting (CALM)

Melissa Blake reported that the CALM committee would like change the way children enter and leave Meeting for Worship. For the last several years, children have joined the larger Meeting for Worship for the first fifteen minutes. This change would have children instead join Meeting for Worship for the last fifteen minutes. The Ministry and Worship Committee has considered the issue and supports this request. Friends recalled that we used to have this practice several years ago, and that it also has some drawbacks. Friend spoke of how best to incorporate children into the richness of Meeting for Worship. Friends agreed to try this arrangement this fall through December. @

### 2015 9.4 Program Committee Request for Support for Angela Hopkins

Nancy Riffer reported that the Program Committee seeks IMM's financial support in inviting Angela Hopkins, who travels for the NYYM Racism Task Group, to our Meeting to facilitate a discussion on racism. Angela was a participant in the "Answering the Call to Radical Faithfulness" program at Pendle Hill with Karen Friedeborn, and Karen strongly recommends her. The Program Committee has depleted its own allocated budget line in paying for our Spring Retreat. Steve Mohlke, a former treasurer of the Meeting, spoke on what happens when a committee overspends on its allocation. The clerk proposed that committees that overspend their budget consult with the Finance Committee, a process that occurred in this case. Finance Committee reported that the overspending would not be problematic. Program Committee asked and Friends approved that Program Committee overspend their budget by \$250 to cover Angela's transportation costs. Finance Committee will consider drafting a minute to formalize an overspending review process. @

### 2015 9.5 Treasurer's Report

The clerk read a brief written report from the Treasurer, Mike Simkin. The report notes expenditures related to the listening de-

vices, increased income from sojourners at the Burt House, and unexpected expenses related to operation and maintenance of the Third Street Meetinghouse, mostly related to inspections and certifications.

### 2015 9.6 Other concerns

A Friend suggested that it might be time to compile a "procedural manual" to document our processes. Friends noted that Tom Brown maintains a list of historically significant minutes indexed by topic. Marilyn Ray volunteered to get the document from Tom and prepare it for wider distribution.

A Friend noted that it can get very warm upstairs. Friends noted that there is a whole-building air circulation system that could be used to alleviate the situation.

A Friend described a concern that the children of our Meeting are sometimes described as "others", not as "us" per se. This Friend reminded us that vis-à-vis many of the elders of the meeting, the adults present today are children.

A Friend shared a concern that there are Friends who need long-term support and that we as a Meeting might do more to provide for them. A member of the Pastoral Care Committee asked that Friends not assume that Pastoral Care is fully aware of the many needs in our community and welcomes reminders.

A Friend echoed the concern from a prior month that it is difficult to know if a Friend needs support if one is not present for Joys and Concerns at the close of Meeting for Worship. @

Nineteen Friends settled into worship at 2:20p before adjourning. Our next regular Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business will be held at the rise of Meeting on October 11, 2015.

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Marin Clarkberg, Recording Clerk*



## More Community Calendar

### 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.

### Rise Again Benefit Concert

**Rise Again Singalong**  
**BENEFIT CONCERT**

Benefit for the new Carry It On Fund, which raises funds to support organizations and causes to which Pete & Tish Seeger were deeply committed.

with:

Annie Patterson & Peter Blood  
The creators of Rise Up Singing, reflecting the mission of their organization 2nd songbook Rise Again

Charlie King

Sparky & Rhonda Recker

and Kim & Reggie Harris  
singing "Walk a Mile"

**Oct 31, 2015 - 7:30 pm**  
**St Paul's Methodist Church**  
402 N. Aurora Street, Ithaca, NY

**Tickets:**  
\$18 in advance \$20 at the door, \$15 and younger \$5. Discount (\$10) and empty tickets available for anyone that needs them. Tickets can be purchased at: Green Star, Autumn Leaves, and Ithaca Guitar Works; also at:  
<http://www.risesingalong.org/events/rise-again-ithaca>  
where books can also be pre-ordered.

Songbooks will also be available at to borrow or buy the evening of the concert, \$5 off retail price. 20 or more books are \$12/book for small size & \$15/book for large size.

**Sponsors:**  
THE CORNELL FOLK SONG SOCIETY  
WE ARE SENeca LEAF  
ITHACA FOLKSONG SOCIETY

SENeca CENTRAL WORKERS FORUM  
FOLKSONG LEAF FORUM  
POTSDAM CITY FORUM

TomPkins COUNTY WORKERS CENTER  
FIRST CHURCH SOCIETY OF ITHACA

Contact Melody Johnson (rcrepea1@twcny.rr.com, 272-8755) for tickets or to order the book. Volunteers are still wanted as well!

### Yarrow Book Launching and Fundraiser Saturday, October 17, 1– 2:30p

Please join us at Buffalo Street Books to launch Mike and Ruth Yarrow's new book, *Voices from the Appalachian Coal Fields: Found Poems*. Photographs by Douglas Yarrow (Mike's brother).

Half of the proceeds from selling the books will be donated to the Tompkins County Workers' Center and to Buffalo Street Books. All royalties go to the Appalachian Citizens' Law Center.

There will be readings of a sample of poems by Joel Ray, Dianne Ferriss and Katy Payne who helped edit the book, and Ruth Yarrow. Simple refreshments provided.

### October Jubilee: Celebrate the Sublime & Beauty

Join us Saturday, October 24 at the Hangar Theater, with art, wine and food reception starting at 6:30pm and the concert beginning at 8pm.

This will be an evening of transcendent orchestral folk, visual art, acrobatic movement, creative writing and sublime Beauty. The Hangar will light up for The October Jubilee. Internationally-touring artist Joe Crookston will host his second annual celebration of music and art, inspiring the audience in ways they never expected. Don't miss this amazing night of magic. Slide guitar, fiddle, visual art and a creative hometown celebration. Phone: 607-273-8588 Tickets: <http://boxoffice.printtixusa.com/hangartheatre/eventcalendar>.

— Gina Varrichio

### Olive Branch Film Series at Cinemapolis

Films—and dessert—October 7 and 28

This fall Cinemapolis is holding an Olive Branch Film Series regarding the Palestine/Israel issue. There will be two films shown in October, "Wedding in Galilee" on Wednesday, October 7, 2015 and "Jaffa, The Orange's Clockwork" on Wednesday, October 28, 2015. Both films begin at 7:15 pm. For a description of the films, go to [www.olivebranchfilmsithaca.net](http://www.olivebranchfilmsithaca.net)

Afterwards, Friends would like to continue the discussion can meet up at Sarah's Patisserie on 130 E. Seneca St., next to the Hilton Plaza Hotel. For more information, contact Pat Sewell at [p.w.sewell@gmail.com](mailto:p.w.sewell@gmail.com).

— Pat Sewell

### Gary Rith: Open Pottery Studio, Oct 10-11

Watch a potter in action! October 10-11, 2015 and November 27-28, 2015 11am-5pm each day.

Gary Edward Rith, 540 Main St, Etna, NY. Main St. Etna is rte. 366 between Cortland and Ithaca, not far from Cornell Vet School, the airport, and NYSEG. From Ithaca: just 3/4 mile north of rte. 13, the light green house on the left. There are 2 driveways plus the roadside for parking. Contact [garyrith@yahoo.com](mailto:garyrith@yahoo.com), 607 347 6444.

### Conversation on Racism, November 15

Angela Hopkins and Irma Guthrie will be joining us on November 15th at 9am for a conversation to help us examine how we are moving ahead in our next steps following the Apology to Afro-Descendants adopted at New York Yearly Meeting (NYYM) Fall sessions, 2013. (More information at <http://www.nnym.org/?q=Apology-AfroDescendants>.)

Angela and Irma are traveling for the Yearly Meeting Task Group on Racism to facilitate conversations. We of NYYM took the step of apologizing for the past. In that same minute, we made a commitment to continue to examine our racism and what actions we need to take next.

# October 2015 Calendar of Ithaca Monthly Meeting

## Welcome To First Day School Sunday, October 4

First Day School resumes for the fall. Join in the welcoming of the children at the closing of silent worship in the meetingroom.

## Social Justice & Peace Witness Committee Sunday, October 4, Rise of Meeting

All are welcome to join upstairs.

## Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business Sunday, October 11, 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.)

## Creating the Beloved Community Sunday, October 18, 9a

Friends are invited to join in a conversation led by Karen Friedeborn about times we have witnessed the beloved community: when boundaries of our separateness are melted down and we feel unity with the spirit and each other. See page 6 for more information.

## Earthcare Witness Sunday, October 18, Rise of Meeting

All are welcome to join upstairs.

## Waging Peace Discussion with David Hartsough Tuesday, October 20, 7p

David Hartsough, a long time Quaker, will be at the Third St. Meetinghouse on Tuesday, October 20, 2015 at 7pm, to talk about his experiences recounted in his recent autobiography, *Waging Peace: Global Adventures of a Life Long Activist*. He will share stories of from his life and invite us into reflecting on our own lives. See page 6 for more information.

## Fall Work Day at the Burt House Saturday, October 24, 9a

Join with students from Cornell who are participating in the Into the Streets Day. There will be delicious refreshments, F/friends, laughter and visiting. And, yes, a whole lot of work gets done in between. Come stay for an hour or longer. Jobs for all ages and inclinations. Direct questions to Brian Parks and Violet Goncarovs, Friends-in-Residence at Burt House@ithacamonthlymeeting.org. The house phone number is 273-5421, if you want to check in on the day. Details about time of day to follow.

## Dish-to-Pass Brunch Sunday, October 25, Rise of Meeting

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

## Newsletter submissions due Thursday, October 29, 5p

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

## Rise Again Benefit Concert Saturday, October 31, 7:30p

See page 7 for more information, and contact Melody Johnson with questions.

Note: additional community calendar events appear on page 9.

### On Sundays

- 10:00a **Meeting for Worship** at Hector Meetinghouse
- 10:20a **First Day School** gathers upstairs at Third Street.
- 10:30a **Meeting for Worship** at the Third Street Meetinghouse
- 11:15a **First Day School** attenders enter the meetingroom for intergenerational Meeting for Worship.

### Other Weekly IMM Events

- Wed 7:30p **Meeting for worship** at the Burt House, 227 N. Willard Way