Meeting for Discernment

The next gathering of the Meetings for Discernment will take place at the Poplar Ridge meetinghouse on Saturday, March 11, 2017 from 9:30am to 3:30pm, hosted by Poplar Ridge Meeting. (Alternate date in case of bad weather: Saturday, March 18, same time and place.) Friends are invited to arrive between 8:30 and 9:15 (coffee, tea, and snacks will be provided), with the Meeting for Discernment to begin at 9:30. Lunch will be provided between sessions.

Meetings for Discernment are a time when the yearly meeting gathers for extended worship without the weight of an agenda for business. Because Meetings for Discernment offer an occasion for the yearly meeting community to hear what is rising up among us, monthly meetings and worship groups are asked to appoint at least one person to attend. Appointees are not asked to bring prepared messages, but rather to speak as moved in the moment by Spirit, by God, by the Inner Christ. By meeting this way in the fullness of our community, we hear that which might not be heard in the midst of committees and attending to business.

God is present in our relationships with one another, animating our interactions with extended families, meeting members, friends, and neighbors. All of these relationships are part of God's covenant with us, written in our hearts.

—NYYM Faith and Practice, p. 37

The Meeting for Discernment will focus on the following queries and also the theme for Summer Sessions 2017: Bringing the Peaceable Kingdom to a Turbulent World.

How do our meetings nourish the Light within the meeting, the Light within those in the meeting, and the Light in others? How do I nourish the light within myself? How do I stay centered, ready to be open to new insights and experiences? How can I become ready to listen for Spirit in those people with different opinions and beliefs? How do I face my fears? How do our meetings help with this?

Your prompt registration will facilitate our planning. To register for day attendance, possible pick-up from the airport or train station, and for hospitality and/or childcare, please complete the online registration form at https://secure.acceptiva.com/?cst=6fb937 (link available at nyym.org) by March 3, earlier if possible, especially if you want hospitality. A good will donation of $10 per person, paid on-site, will help defray the cost of childcare, a simple lunch, and other necessities. For information regarding financial assistance for travel expenses, contact Jeffrey Aaron: (732) 247-9430 or jephreyaaron@aol.com. For those planning overnight stays at nearby hotels, there are various options in Aurora, Auburn, and Ithaca.

The Poplar Ridge meetinghouse is at 1868 Poplar Ridge Rd, in the hamlet of Poplar Ridge, Aurora, NY. Winter weather advisory: If the weather seems questionable, please check your e-mail on Friday, March 10 (if you have provided us with your email address), or call the NYYM office at (212) 673-5750. For information about local arrangements, you may reach Andrew Simkin, clerk of Poplar Ridge Meeting, by cell phone at (206) 390-4286 or by email at simkinat@msn.com.
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Justice For All Concert, April 7th
Featuring Lea Gilmore, Annie Patterson, Peter Blood
Please help spread the word! The Ithaca Monthly Meeting is sponsoring a Justice for All Concert at the First Unitarian Church on Friday, April 7th, at 7:30 pm. We will join together in songs that emphasize the struggles for equal rights and for the dignity and safety of people from all religions, races, genders, sexual orientations, abilities and national origins.

The concert will be led by Lea Gilmore, a powerful blues/gospel/jazz singer and civic activist, who was recognized by Essence Magazine in 2005 as one of the “25 Women Shaping the World” and continues to work tirelessly to advance racial justice and build bridges in her native Baltimore. Others who will join her include Annie Patterson and Peter Blood, Friends from the Mt. Toby Meeting in Massachusetts and creators of the songbook Rise Up Singing. Tickets available on-line at https://www.riseupandsinging.org/events/justice-ithaca or at Greenstar.

Proceeds from the concert will benefit the Friends Center for Racial Justice, our new spiritual gathering place at the Burtt House, where people of all faiths may join with Quakers to better understand and heal from internalized racism, recreate our communities as places where all are valued and affirmed, and move toward justice, reconciliation, and recognizing that of God in all people.

There is a need for Friends to help with the silent auction and concert refreshments! Please contact Karen Friedeborn (607-280-5208) Karen.friedeborn@gmail.com if you can help.

Friends Center for Racial Justice Event a Success
On February 17-19th, the Friends Center for Racial Justice (FCRJ) hosted its first weekend open house event at the Burtt House for out-of-town Friends working on anti-racism. Twelve Friends from NYYM Committees– European American Quakers Working to End Racism and the Task Group on Racism– met in their respective committees and for a joint session to discuss the work of anti-racism within the Religious Society of Friends. Ithaca Monthly Meeting Friends joined them for fellowship on Friday night and hosted a lunch after Meeting for Worship. Many thanks to all who contributed to making the weekend a success, including the FCRJ Coordinating Committee and FCRJ Ithaca Team. The hospitality was well received and Friends were grateful for the plentiful food, friendship and lovely accommodations. The energy of Friends committed to anti-racism work added to the rich spirit already present at the Burtt House and served to dedicate the space for all that is to come at the Friends Center for Racial Justice.

— Karen Friedeborn

A note from the teenage poet
I am grateful for all the support I have received from the Meeting. Many Friends have boosted my confidence in my writing, and it means a lot. It has been a long time since I’ve had a poem in the newsletter, but recently I started writing poetry again. And, I have started a blog for my poems! To read more or follow me by email, visit http://theasforest.blogspot.com/

— Thea Clarkberg

Mensch

— Thea Clarkberg

Cold bites.
I bark back.
White water whirls across asphalt, through spokes, under chassis.
Bitter, piercing air burns as it begs for bits of warmth.
The streets are savage and raw:
the stud whistles to the bitch, “Fuck you,” calls the car.
We bark back, shouting a primal, heart-filled “Ei ei eeeeeeeeee”
to the roar of falls, the crack of thunder, the steep depths of blood-red earth. Exhilarating. Cruel.
The mother of us all: she taught us well. We know how to run.
Rubber presses against metal. Speed dims.

Blood burns through my fingertips and flesh aches in protest. But warmth is only heartless to the cold; when it’s just us two, we are content.
Sunlight slants through the pale hall, warm heart beats softly under warm skin, shadows flicker.
“Bitter” is just a memory; embers glow steadily with agreeable satisfaction and sparks burn long and bright.
In the dark, dazzling frost disturbed delicate growth. Then, the sun came up—fire, filament, and fuse.

Light through spring leaves. Speeding around a bend in the wilderness. Twirling cotton dress. $9.99.
No—humanity is more than appearances, my love. I look, soft eyed, when the looker looks away. I look; soft eyes meet.
My heart is tapped like a piano key. I listen to the note blossom with a pang, sweet and high, but rich.
My touch would melt ice and my lips would kiss cool, wet fingers.
Some ache with desire, some burn, sick with the smell of their own hot skin.
Warmth has many meanings, my pet.

The cold does not bite anymore. These days, it only barks. Now it starts to whimper, crushing beneath wheels.
Why are we still afraid? There are so many ways to be warm.

The day is done, the snow is gone, wet sidewalks hiss. I fall… slowly, at first, a sense of dread, not of the fall, but of the more permanent destination… and then faster, the laws reassert themselves.
The dam… the dawn… my dear. The three are one, and I embrace them, blistering, toasty, and tender too. It is cold down here. Still, I breathe a slow, deep breath in the quiet; warmth seeps from my soul into my toes and my nose and my fingertips as humanity leaves my lips.
Friends General Conference Summer Gathering July 2-8: Ripples Start Where Spirit Moves

Feeling called to volunteer with the HS Program?

Kendra and Ben, the 2017 coordinating team for the High School Program at the Gathering, invite you to consider applying to join our counseling staff this year. Counselors must have been out of high school for at least a year, but no previous experience at the Gathering or with youth is necessary. Counselors will spend the week fully immersed in the High School program, helping to build the amazing community by living with the participants, leading support groups, playing games, being part of affinity groups, and learning from some of the most vital, dynamic members of our faith. The official application will be posted soon on the Gathering website, but in the meantime, please email Ben (ben.hustis@gmail.com) or Kendra (graham.kendra@hotmail.com) with any questions you may have.

Spring Gathering May 19-21
Sanctuary Everywhere: Love in Action

Spring Gathering is a get-together for all Friends of the region that Ithaca Meeting is part of, called Farmington Scipio Regional Meeting (Syracuse to Elmira and Meetings west of us).

Lucy Duncan from AFSC (American Friends Service Committee) will give the plenary “Sanctuary Everywhere” on Saturday a.m. and also a one hour workshop Saturday afternoon. Other highlights of the weekend include Christopher Sammond on “Welcoming the Other in Ourselves, our Meeting, and the World”; Buffy Curtis and Liseli Haines talking about “Lessons from Standing Rock”, and Barbara Spring on Aging Resources Consultation & Help—better known as ARCH—and prison work.

Spring Gathering runs from Friday evening until Sunday afternoon (May 19-21) and will be held at Watson Homestead, in Painted Post (about an hour from Ithaca). There is plenty of time for fellowship, worship, singing, dancing, and even swimming! Details on how to register will be shared via the listserv and via Meeting announcements.

— Bronwyn Mohlke

Spring Sessions March 31-April 2

Growth Opportunities for White Allies, Apr 21-23

This weekend-long workshop will provide an opportunity for white Quakers drawn to anti-racism work to engage around the joys, challenges, learning and spiritual grounding that comes with being a white ally. Bring your questions, your challenges and your open mind as we explore together. Facilitated by Jeff Hitchcock, Judy Mielke, Steve Mohlke and Pam Wood. Registration information and more details will follow on the email list and next month. This is a Friends Center for Racial Justice program.

Acknowledging, Affirming & Continuing to Build a Community of Practice Around Youth Work

The Farmington-Scipio Region Youth Institute is sponsoring this event on March 4th at Rochester Meeting. It will be a full day conference facilitated by Melinda Wenner Bradley, Chris DeRoller and Mike Clark and sponsored by the Region. For more information see http://www.quakercloud.org/cloud/western-ny-quakers/events/regional-youth-institute. A great opportunity!
Ithaca Monthly Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business, February 12, 2016

Clerk: John Lewis
Assistant Clerk: Bronwyn Mohlke
Recording Clerks: Marin Clarkberg, Blair Jennings

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

2016 11.1 Gathering

Ithaca Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends met in Monthly Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business on February 12, 2017. At 12:05 pm, fourteen Friends settled into worship.

Clerk acknowledged Antonia Saxon and Nancy Gabriel who were holding the Meeting in the Light.

Clerk read Quakers in Britain, Faith and Practice 2013:

Take heed, dear Friends, to the promptings of love and truth in your hearts. Trust them as the leadings of God whose Light shows us our darkness and brings us to new life.

Clerk reviewed the agenda, noting that the annual reports would be interspersed with other items on our agenda.

2017 2.2 Continuing committee reports on their activities in 2016, part I

Kathleen Gale read the combined 2016 annual report from Alternative to Violence Project committees. Friends received the report. The full written report has been shared on the Meeting’s listserv and may be provided to any Friend upon request to Kathleen, our Clerk, or the Recording Clerk.

2017 2.3 Third Street Meetinghouse Committee

Gina Varrichio read the following proposed minute from the Third Street Meetinghouse Committee:

Two upstairs rooms in the Meetinghouse, Peace and Integrity, will be reserved for use for IMM activities (e.g. committee meetings, GrIST groups, etc.). The scheduler will inform community groups that these two rooms are for IMM use only. Requests for exceptions to this policy should come to the Third Street Meetinghouse Committee for review. Friends are advised to reserve space for their meetings and events.

Gina reminded Friends that GrIST groups were Growing In the Spirit Together conversation groups, and were shared here as an example of an IMM activity. Friends approved the minute. @

2017 2.4 Peace and Social Justice

Kathleen Gale shared that Meeting has approved committing financial support for Shirley Way’s ministry in El Salvador and to continue discernment about the best source of those funds from within the Meeting’s budget.

Shirley Way has been to El Salvador in past years and is going once again along with Fazilee Buechel from Feb 14 to March 7. They go with the knowledge of the ongoing and long-term violence in El Salvador. The work is about walking with, and supporting and growing the Salvadoran team of facilitators, as much as it is about finding ways to offset the trauma and fear and despair that can overwhelm.

Friends approved allocating $300 to support Shirley’s work in El Salvador, and take the money from the “Emerging Ministries” fund that currently has a balance of $1659. @

2017 2.5 Continuing committee reports on their activities in 2016, part II

Ruth Yarrow began by reading the 2016 annual report from the Ad Hoc Committee for Racial Justice. Friends received the report. Angela Hopkins read the 2016 annual report from the Friends Center for Racial Justice. Friends received the report. Printed reports were shared in the Meeting, and full written reports may be provided to any Friend upon request to the presenters, our Clerk, or the Recording Clerk. @

2017 2.6 Friends Center for Racial Justice

On behalf of the Friends Center for Racial Justice, Karen Friedeborn shared information regarding a benefit concert—the Justice for All Sing-Along Concert—to be held on Friday, April 7th, 2017 at the First Unitarian Society of Ithaca. This interfaith sing-along concert will focus on racial justice issues. The Friends Center for Racial Justice requests that the Ithaca Monthly Meeting become a co-sponsor for the concert. The Center further asks Friends to help provide baked goods for refreshments, to donate items for the silent auction and to help spread the word about the concert. Karen distributed a sample letter that might be signed by our clerk as a part of a sponsorship effort; the letter invites other congregations and social justice organizations to participate in the Sing-Along. There is no financial commitment requested from Ithaca Monthly Meeting.

Friends approved cosponsoring the April 7th Justice for All Sing-Along Concert, and request the Clerk send a letter in the spirit of the sample Karen provided and as described above. @

2017 2.7 Continuing committee reports on their activities in 2016, part III

As a continuation of the delivery of 2016 annual reports, Friends heard the reading of several reports. Tom Brown read the 2016 annual report from the Burtt House Committee; Clerk read the annual report from Earthcare; Tom Brown read the annual report of the Finance Committee; Clerk read the annual report from the

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Minutes, continued from page 4

Greeters; Marin Clarkberg read the annual report on behalf of Hospitality; Gina Varrichio read the report from the Third Street Meetinghouse Committee; and Lenora Schneller read the report from the Young Friends. Friends received each of these reports. @

Full, written reports have been shared on the Meeting’s listserv and may be provided to any Friend upon request to the appropriate committees, our Clerk, or the Recording Clerk.

2017 2.8 Treasurer’s Report

Mike Simkin, Treasurer, reported that January is typically a slow month, and that this January is consistent with or better than that past pattern. @

2017 2.9 Other Concerns

A Friend appreciated the opportunity to comment upon or discuss the annual reports, going beyond simply listening to them.

2017 2.10 Closing

Fifteen Friends settled into silent worship at 1:25 pm before adjourning. Our next regular Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business will be held at the rise of Meeting on March 12, 2017.

Respectfully submitted,

Marin Clarkberg

March in IMM History

10 Years Ago (March 11, 2007)

Antonia Saxon read an introduction and then the draft Minute of Process as requested at the December 2006 Monthly Meeting and written by Antonia Saxon and Steve Mohlke after receiving input from Meeting. Clerk (Tom Brown) requested that we contemplate this proposed minute of process over the next month and revisit it at Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business in April. Clerk requests we send comments to Antonia or Steve. Friends expressed the hope that the minute could be a first step toward reconciliation and moving forward.

[For newer Ithaca Friends, the above minute of process concerned the difficult five-year period IMM went through in attempting to build a new meetinghouse on land purchased by the Meeting off Route 79 East. The effort was subsequently laid down and the property was sold to the City of Ithaca.]

20 Years Ago (March 10, 1997)

Trustees reported that several committee members met with our attorney, Elizabeth Bixler, and with the city attorney, and discussed a number of issues relating to “the point” [former Burtt House property adjoining upper Fall Creek] becoming a city park. These included lighting, the marking of the boundary, and concerns about the view. These issues will be covered in a contract. The right of way will be part of the deed process. A separate contract with the city to be signed by all landowners will cover designation of the park as a quiet use area, and having it closed at night. [The sale of this parcel to the City of Ithaca occurred in late 1999].

25 Years Ago (March 9, 1992)

Regarding the Program Committee, Friends reported a warm reception to Janis Kelly’s Bible study sessions, which seems to indicate a desire for more such sessions to study our traditions. It is especially rich as an activity just before Meeting for Worship.

55 Years Ago (March 12, 1962)

The Facilities Committee presented a detailed report of space needs of the Meeting compared to space available at that time in Anabel Taylor Hall. It also included information that Ned and Marjorie Burtt intended to convey their property to IMM when they no longer had a use for it and that this information is contained in their wills. Four recommendations from the Facilities Committee report were approved: remaining in Anabel Taylor for the time being, continuing a building fund, continuing a small facilities committee, and expressing deep appreciation to the Burtts for their gift.

75 Years Ago (March 19, 1942)

A special meeting of Ithaca Friends was held to address a concern expressed in a letter from Wendell Hickey, explaining his position on the draft. Having registered as a CO and filled out his questionnaire, he now regrets this action and refuses to take the next step in the process, which is a physical examination. He wishes to inform the Meeting of his stand and suggests that since the indictment is from the Ithaca district, Friends might help in the matter of bail. This letter elicited various shades of opinion relative to the Civil Public Service (CPS) camps. Although we are not at all happy with the restrictions placed on the camps, they seem to most of us to represent an important concession from the past by the government in which COs can be doing work of peace-time importance and avoid an open clash with the draft law. Our other young members after much discussion have made choices from the possibilities provided by law. Since Wendell has been isolated from a Friends Meeting, it was felt that a letter should be sent suggesting the advisability of following the regulations. Two other persons associated at CPS camps in MA near where Wendell is currently living were suggested as contacts who might be helpful. It was noted that since Meeting owns no property, it cannot provide bail money. [Note: Wendell Hickey came to Ithaca after receiving this letter and had both individual and group discussions concerning his stance on the draft. He maintained his decision to refuse further cooperation with the draft and later served time in prison at Danbury, CT.]

80 Years Ago (March 23, 1937)

The discussion of this Meeting had as its topic “Achieving Racial Justice,” which was led by Edith Cope.

— Tom Brown, IMM Historian
Women’s Chair Yoga, Mondays and Thursdays
11a-noon
Women of all ages are welcome to gather for gentle, yet powerful restoration of heart, mind, soul, strength. Laughter likely. No experience or equipment needed. Just come, or if you have questions ask Nancy Gabriel (339-7123; ntg2@cornell.edu.) We offer a donation to the teacher.

March 2017 Calendar of Ithaca Monthly Meeting

Men’s Fellowship Lunch
Thursday, March 2, noon
Several Friendly men have been meeting for lunch downtown and we’d like to formalize it a little. Please join us for lunch on the first Thursday of the month at Diamonds on Green Street at noon. The $10 lunch buffet provides a great opportunity to get together and socialize in an easy manner! More details? Email Lynn Podhaski at lynnpodhaski@yahoo.com or Liam Murphy at liamgbmurphy@verizon.net.

Women’s Fellowship
Friday, March 3, 7p
Join for casual conversation, no agenda, with or without knitting. We are going to try some different locations... at least until the Ithaca Bakery is open later than 8pm. This month, we will gather at Purity Ice Cream—a comfortable place offering more than ice cream. 700 Cascadilla Street.

Soup, Film on Race, and Discussion
Tuesday, March 7, 5:30p, 6p
Arrive for 5:30 soup. Film “Cracking the Codes” starts at 6, followed by a lively discussion led by Tommy Beers and Tommy Miller. Even if you missed the first half of the film a week ago, you will be glad you came to this event. IMM Racial Justice Education Subcommittee.

Meeting for Discernment
Saturday, March 11, 9:30a
Poplar Ridge Meetinghouse. See page 1 for more information.

Open Discussion on Racial Justice
Sunday, March 12, 9a
Join us upstairs at the 3rd St. Meeting for a pre-Meeting-for-Worship discussion of racial issues and how they have been and are affecting our lives. IMM Racial Justice Education Subcommittee.

On Sundays
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.

Death Cafe, Saturday, April 1, 2-4p
Death Cafes are gatherings to share thought-provoking, engaging and respectful conversations on death. They are not intended as bereavement support, counseling or therapy. Open to all, but space is limited. To RSVP, please contact Angela Mennitto at deathcafeithaca@gmail.com. Learn a little more about this Ithaca Death Cafe here: http://deathcafe.com/deathcafe/4515/ or contact Bronwyn Mohlke.

Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business
Sunday, March 12, Rise of Meeting
Join in the Quaker decision-making process. Agenda items should be sent to our clerk, John Lewis, by the preceding Wednesday.

Newsletter submissions due
Thursday, March 23, 5p
Please provide your newsletter contributions to Marin Clarkberg: 150 Giles St., 14850, 607-279-4722, clarkberg@cornell.edu.

Last Friday Night Supper
Friday, March 24, 6p
We will gather again for supper on the last Friday of each month January through April. All are welcome. Soup and bread will be provided. Side dishes or desserts are welcome, but it is OK to arrive without bringing food to share. There is no agenda, just a chance to enjoy some non-rushed time together.

Open Discussion on Racial Justice
Sunday, March 26, 9a
Join us upstairs at the 3rd St. Meeting for a pre-Meeting-for-Worship discussion of racial issues and how they have been and are affecting our lives. IMM Racial Justice Education Subcommittee.

Dish-to-Pass Brunch
Sunday, March 26, Rise of Meeting
Bring something tasty to share if you can. All are welcome.

ARCH Discussion
Sunday, March 26, After Brunch
Our ARCH (Aging Resources Consultation & Help) committee is hosting Friend and local Elder Law Attorney, Marcie Finlay, who will speak about legal papers one might wish to have in order. This workshop would be useful for all adults and all are welcome.

Other Weekly IMM Events
Mid-week Meeting at the Burtt House
Wednesdays at 7:30p
The Burtt House is at 227 North Willard Way, Ithaca.