

Newsletter of the

# Ithaca Monthly Meeting

of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

January 2011

## IMM CONTACTS

### Clerk:

Steve Mohlke  
52 Gray Road • Ithaca NY 14850  
607-216-8411  
clerk@ithacamonthlymeeting.org

### Treasurer:

Mike Simkin  
3137 Jacksonville Road  
Trumansburg NY 14886  
607-387-5174 • mes13@cornell.edu

### Ministry & Worship:

Carolyn Kenyon  
607-273-7922 • ckenyon@twcny.rr.com

### Pastoral Care:

Emily Williams  
703.297.9849 • ewy310@gmail.com

### Childcare Requests:

Ginny Gartlein • 607-272-3471

### Burt House:

Mary Balfour, Friend in Residence  
227 N. Willard Way, Ithaca, NY 14850  
607-273-5421

### 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](http://ithacamonthlymeeting.org)

## Newsletter Submissions Due January 27th

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

## Growing in Spirit Together:

— Steve Mohlke and Tonia Saxon, on behalf of Ministry and Worship

*‘And where is the Spirit in that for you?’*

In January we'll be offering the opportunity for those in the Meeting who have been yearning for committed spiritual exploration to form groups in order to do this work together.

We'll ask people whether they want to meet every week, every second week, or every third week. (If there aren't enough people for one option, we'll shuffle groups accordingly.) We won't put spouses or partners in the same group unless they specify that they would like to be together.

The groups will begin meeting in February and will meet together through May. At that point, we'll look into reforming groups for the next several months. The first time a group meets, the members will schedule the rest of the dates. Attendance should be taken seriously; if possible, notice should be given if a meeting has to be missed, and a member who misses a meeting should make meaningful contact with at least one other group member before the following meeting.

Groups will be given material to guide the first few sessions. This might be spiritual writing in the form of poetry or prose, or a group of queries. Groups can then decide whether to continue with a structured approach or move to a looser format.

Groups tend to drift toward ordinary conversation, which is often more comfortable than the kind of spiritual sharing we hope

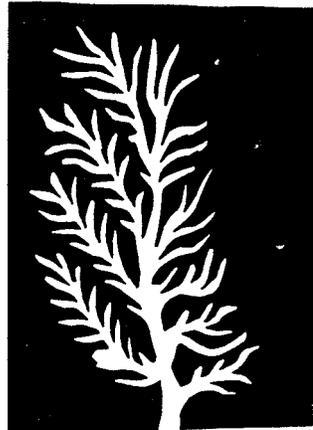
these groups will nurture. Each group of three will be assigned a facilitator. The facilitator will take primary responsibility for helping the group decide on a direction and to stay true to its intent. Care will be taken to avoid common pitfalls: domination of a group by a single individual, the offering of advice, and over-thinking.

Floundering and ambiguity are an expected part of the process. Group members may find at first that they don't feel they have anything to share. With trial and error, we learn more about ourselves. Each of us has some part of the truth, and by sharing our Inward Light, it may burn a little brighter.

Along the way, the facilitators will be alert to changes that have to be made. We don't expect to get this right the first time. Some groups might fail to gel, or encounter other unforeseen circumstances. Other groups

may do so well together that they want to continue meeting after May. Although the group may find value in meeting indefinitely, it may be of greater benefit to the wider Meeting if groups are reconstituted periodically.

If you are interested in joining a group, please fill out the on-line form accessible at <http://tinyurl.com/237ugzj> or contact Steve Mohlke ([smohlke@lightlink.com](mailto:smohlke@lightlink.com)) or Tonia Saxon ([tonia@iecc.com](mailto:tonia@iecc.com)). Please include your preference to meet once a week, once every two weeks, or every three weeks, as well as any other information you feel is pertinent.



A E R

## What is the State of our Meeting?

Monthly Meetings are called each year to prepare a State of the Meeting report which, according to Faith and Practice, “should be a searching self-examination by the meeting and its members of their spiritual strengths and weaknesses and of the efforts made to foster growth in the spiritual life.” This year we are considering the following queries:

1. Meetings are living bodies and thus experience cycles of growth and dormancy. What new growth do you greet in your meeting? What losses do you mourn?
2. Many meetings struggle with issues of the world such as racism, class inequality, and discrimination by sexual orientation. With what issues does your meeting struggle? How does your meeting labor with difficult issues?

Please join us at the rise of Meeting on January 30, 12:30 to 2:00p to examine with us the state of our Meeting. If you cannot attend this meeting, but have thoughts to share, please contact someone on the Ministry and Worship Committee: Marin Clarkberg, Barbara Ganzel, Carolyn Kenyon, Chuck Mohler, or Wendy Wolfe.

## Upcoming at Powell House

Powell House is a spiritual retreat center owned and operated by New York Yearly Meeting. Friends who participate in Powell House retreat weekends typically stay in a cozy bedroom in either Pitt Hall (with 38 beds) or the Anna Curtis Center (with 46 beds). Meals are included in the price of the weekend. There are also 57 acres of grounds with hiking trails, two ponds, a campground & pavilion, and several fire circles.

Cost of a typical adult weekend conference: Adults \$220, Youth & college age (13-22) \$110, children (up to 12) \$55. Ithaca Monthly Meeting offers scholarships for first-timers, and for others who may need assistance with the cost of a workshop.

*Trusting in the Slow Work of God* is part of the series, *Feeding the Fire: Growing in Relationship with God*, a series of retreats sponsored by NYYM's Spiritual Nurture Working Group. This workshop will take place January 21st through 23rd.

*If your heart yearns for a deeper relationship with the Divine and a hunger to live in the Power that transforms us and our world, the retreats in this series may speak to you. There will be space to turn more fully to God, to open and ground and deepen your relationship with the Divine, and to discern how you are being called to live a new life with and for others.*

*As we offer ourselves into relationship with the Spirit, we will explore the ways we are called to be in full relationship with each other; in other words, how to live faithfully in community, allowing the gifts we have been given to be used to build up our community, the body of Christ.*

Many other workshops—including weekends for youth—are described at [powellhouse.org](http://powellhouse.org). Friends are encouraged to learn more about this great resource of New York Yearly Meeting.

## The Joy of Quaker Committees

*Many of us have spent countless hours in Quaker committees. How often have these hours been tedious and draining? How often have they been energizing and joyful? What causes the first—and what creates the second kind of committee?*

If you have never considered clerking a committee, and can't imagine yourself clerking, try considering the query, Is this something I might be led to do?

There are two opportunities friends might like to note:

First, IMM is offering generous scholarships to a weekend event at Pendle Hill “Clerking and Working with Spirit” with Steve Smith, February 25-27. (It is this event that is described with the italic queries above.) Carolyn Kenyon will be driving to Pendle Hill for the workshop and has space for three riders. For information about scholarships, Pendle Hill, or this workshop, contact Carolyn, [clkenyon09@gmail.com](mailto:clkenyon09@gmail.com) or 273-7922.

Second, for something shorter and closer to home, Steve Mohlke will facilitate a discussion on clerking committees on Tuesday January 11 at the Burt House at 7:15pm.

What does it take to clerk a committee? A belief that the work the committee is doing is worthwhile; a desire to facilitate that work and make it more effective; and knowledge of a few basic practices.

We'll discuss forming agendas, running meetings, appropriate uses of phone and email, reporting to monthly meeting, exploring the role of the Spirit in the work of the committee and other topics of interest to participants.

A special note for newer committee members: the clerk of the committee need not necessarily be its most experienced member. Sometimes the newest member can make an effective clerk. If you're currently clerking a committee, think you might clerk, or if you're an experienced clerk with something to share, please consider attending.

## News from the Social Justice Committee

Thanks to everyone's generosity, we were able to give five families gifts of clothes, books and toys for Christmas. The Elves Program said we took on more than any other organization and they appreciated our help very much. OAR is also very grateful for the support of cards and stamps for letters for the inmates in the jail.

There is a pressing need for a Saturday driver for the jail transportation service which the Meeting provides for the families and friends of inmates in the jail. There is no way for people to get to the jail if they do not have a car. It is a much appreciated service.

Volunteer time is once a month and it can be either a full day or a half day. If anyone is able to do this, please contact Barbara Barry either at 533-7563 or [fb12@cornell.edu](mailto:fb12@cornell.edu).

## Meeting Friends: Susan Wolf's Birthday

Susan Wolf will be celebrating her 65th birthday on Saturday, January 22nd from 7-9p at the Song Common House at Ecovillage. There will be cake and ice cream [vegan chocolate cake, wheat-free version—not vegan—available and vegan “ice cream”] and games. Bring any interesting games you'd like to share. There will also be a ceremonial burning of Susan's car loan—it's finally paid off! Please RSVP so Susan knows how much cake to make! Susan Wolf, QuakerWolf@gmail.com, 272-1618

## Spiritual Nurture at Perry City

Anna Obermeyer of Perry City Meeting would like to offer a class organized as a series of stand alone workshops looking at spiritual nurture issues that face many Monthly Meetings. Topic would include but not be limited to; deepening worship, talking with each other about our spiritual journeys, deepening business meeting, and reaching out to newcomers. There would be no buying of books for this class although there will be short readings as hand-outs.

Are Friends interested in such a class? And if so when would Friends like to start? Please contact Anna at [anna.e.obermeyer@gmail.com](mailto:anna.e.obermeyer@gmail.com).

## Living and Dying with Hospice

Sue Perlcut of CloseToHome Productions, an Ithaca based video production company is proud to announce the premiere and release of the documentary “Beets and Beans: Living and Dying with Hospice,” a 30-minute video that dispels some myths about what it means to work with a Hospice provider by interweaving the rich journeys of patients, caregivers, and family members at different points in their interactions with hospice services.

The premiere, co-sponsored by Hospicare, will be held on Thursday, January 27 at Cinemapolis, with showings at 2pm and 7pm with a suggested donation of \$10. At the premiere, meet the filmmakers and talk with staff from Hospicare. The documentary is a half-hour video that features a diverse cast of all ages interviewed in their homes or Hospice setting in Ithaca, NY and Seattle WA. Please visit the web site and watch the trailer: <http://beetsandbeans.com>.

## Managing Giving to IMM through Electronic Transfers

Meeting Treasurer has set up a way for f/Friends to make donations to Meeting easy and regular using electronic funds transfer from your bank to the Meeting's. If you have any question feel free to e-mail or call the treasure; Mike Simkin [mes13@cornell.edu](mailto:mes13@cornell.edu), 607-387-5174.



### Enjoy the convenience of electronic giving

Our Meeting offers electronic giving, which allows you to make donations on a scheduled, automatic basis. If you are currently writing checks, you may especially appreciate electronic giving. It is convenient for you and provides much-needed donation consistency for our Meeting.

### How to get started

To set up electronic donations, simply complete the authorization form below and return it to the Treasurer: Mike Simkin, 3137 Jacksonville Rd, Trumansburg, NY 14886. Donations can be debited automatically from either a checking or savings account.

## AUTHORIZATION FORM

Ithaca Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends Inc.

Your name:

Address:

City, State, Zip:

Email address:

I would like to make the following contribution(s):

- General Operating Fund \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Building Fund \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Kitchen Cupboard \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Total**

Date of first contribution: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

Frequency of contribution (check one):

- Weekly – Mondays
- Bi-Weekly (every other week)
- Semi-monthly – 1<sup>st</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>
- Monthly on the 1<sup>st</sup>
- Monthly on the 15<sup>th</sup>

### CHECKING / SAVINGS

Complete this section if using your checking or savings account

Please debit my (check one):

- Checking account—attach voided check
- Savings account—attach voided deposit slip

Routing #:

Account #:

Valid routing # must start with 0,1,2 or 3

I authorize the above organization to process debit entries to the above account. I understand that this authority will remain in effect until I provide reasonable notification to terminate the authorization.

Authorized signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: / /

## Longfellow Bridge

— *Thea Clarkberg*

A long ribbon off grey cement stretches ahead,  
only little cracks and stains break the dull city desert.  
Little birds fly in a group in the sky,  
bright sun flashing off their wings.  
Dark green flaky paint tries,  
without succeeding,  
to cover rusty red-brown metal.  
Little piles of leaves have formed in the corners.  
many have escaped though,  
and are dancing in the wind  
with red plastic cups.  
The grey cement is dull,  
but when you look closely  
it sparkles like the broken glass at my feet.  
The glass reflects a hardy dandelion,  
trying to get a couple last breaths before winter.  
The reflection quivers as a big train rolls by.  
warm sun warms our backs as we walk away.

## Why I'm Running the Boston Marathon: A Fundraising Appeal

— *Doug Shire*

I haven't shared much about my professional pursuits with many Friends, but you may have heard that I've devoted over half of my professional career to making a real contribution toward developing an implantable medical device that will restore useful vision to the blind.

I have had the privilege of working with the devoted staff at Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary (MEEI) for much of that time, and now I'm bringing the same commitment to running a first marathon that my team and I have brought to our work.

So far, I've contributed my brain power to the development of a retinal prosthetic for the blind. Now, I need your assistance to contribute with my heart and body, as well.

The last couple of years have been difficult ones for my family and me, and this has prevented me from attending Meeting as often as I'd like.

My running, however, is in gratitude for the life and career with which I've been blessed, despite these challenges. What inspires me as a 47-year old of average athletic ability to run the Boston Marathon in 2011? It's determination. Every day, my family, my research co-workers, and the blind patients whose lives we will impact, all get up. They acknowledge their challenges and the things they can't change, and then they go about doing their best anyway.

This is what I'm doing, too, and it's why I'm asking for your support.

I have been training hard for a month now, and I have already reduced my running time at the 10K distance and lost 12 pounds in the process!

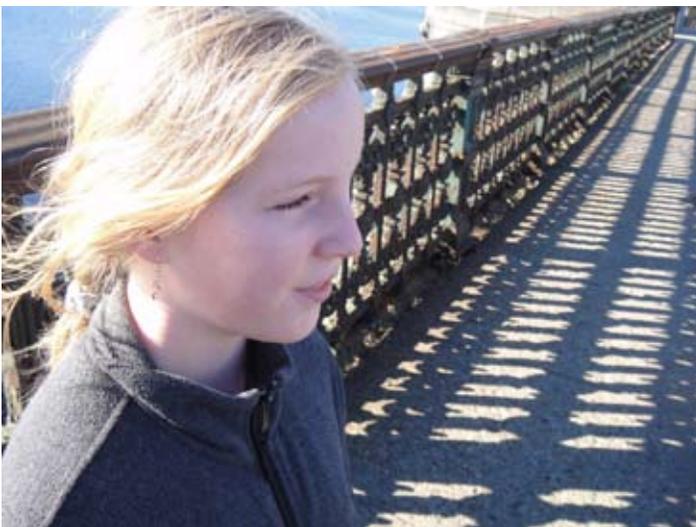
If you happen to be in the Boston area, it would be great to see some of you come out to cheer me on during the race on Patriot's Day, Monday, April 18th.

I am running this race to raise funds for Mass. Eye and Ear's research programs aimed at restoring vision to blind patients, and I'd really appreciate your sponsorship to do so.

Even a modest tax-deductible donation at <http://www.firstgiving.com/dougshire> would be very helpful in reaching my minimum \$5000 fundraising commitment. If you prefer to donate by check, please make the check out to "Foundation of Mass. Eye and Ear, Inc." and write "Doug Shire - Marathon Fundraiser" in the Memo line, and mail to Doug Shire, 106 Rachel Carson Way, Ithaca, NY 14850.

Please join in supporting me to help bring the miracle of restored vision to thousands of blind patients through MEEI's work via this secure Web site!! Also check out the Boston Retinal Implant Web site at <http://www.bostonretinalimplant.org>.

A healthy and happy New Year to all, and thanks in advance for your support.



*Thea Clarkberg on the Longfellow Bridge connecting Boston to Cambridge.*

**Minutes of the December 12, 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.)

201012.1 Gathering

Ithaca Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society Friends met in Monthly Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business in the Café at Anabel Taylor Hall on December 12, 2010. At 12:45 PM, 19 Friends gathered and settled into silence. Clerk reviewed the agenda of the day's business. He extended our appreciation to Friends with the special concern for holding today's Meeting in the Light, Elspeth Rhodin and Rebekah Tanner. Clerk read a Hafiz poem which begins, "Out /of a great need /We are all holding hands and climbing. /Not loving is a letting go." Friends gathered again in worship before turning to today's business.

201012.2 Finance Committee

Dick Crepeau brought two matters for Meeting's consideration. 1) Our NYYM Representative, Nancy Gabriel, had requested that \$500 be added to the IMM 2011 budget to support the Young Friends in Residence (YFIR) Program. After clarification and comments, Friends APPROVED this addition. Concern was raised that adding a new item to the proposed budget at business meeting does not permit proper seasoning. This concern was noted by Finance Committee. Addressing the broader and persistent concern for IMM's contributions to NYYM and Powell House was referred to Ministry and Worship. 2) Friends APPROVED the 2011 Budget, first proposed at November business meeting, after clarifications and comments had been discussed. @

201012.3 Hector Meetinghouse Committee

Jim Finlay presented the committee's report with details of needed chimney repairs and estimates received. The projected costs of \$4,053.27 are well within the HMH Repair Fund reserves. Meeting APPROVED moving forward with the work. @

201012.4 Peace Witness Committee

Marjorie Baines presented the committee's report, with supporting information, recommending donations of their allocated funds to the following organizations: Churches for Mideast Peace, \$150; Friends' Peace Teams, \$150; Ramallah Friends' School, \$250; Veterans' Sanctuary in Ithaca, \$100. APPROVED. @

201012.5 Social Justice Committee (SJC)

Sue Ruff presented the committee's report which summarized the disbursement so far this year of the funds they oversee. Based on further research, the committee recommends a change in a previously approved donation of \$100, to the Fistula foundation instead of the Worldwide Fistula Fund. For the remaining pre-approved

funds in their care, the committee recommends sending \$200 to the Alternatives to Violence Project (Poplar Ridge office). SJC intends to offer their remaining discretionary funds as follows: Food Bank of the Southern Tier, \$200; Elves Project (Ithaca), \$100. APPROVED. @

201012.6 Nominating Committee

Sue Ruff presented the report showing the roster of Friends serving in offices and committees of the Meeting, with proposed names for filling vacancies. Friends offered questions and suggestions, and APPROVED the 2011 roster of IMM committees.

201012.7 Ministry and Worship (M&W)

Carolyn Kenyon brought two matters for Meeting's consideration. 1) Meeting APPROVED welcoming Kai Truame, daughter of Anneliese and Lynn Truame, into membership. 2) Jeff deCastro has requested a Clearness Committee for membership. M&W proposed the names of Marilyn Ray, Tonia Saxon (convenor), and Tony Serviente. APPROVED. @

201012.8 Ad Hoc Working Group for Immigrant Concerns (WG)

Garry Thomas presented the Working Group's semi-annual report to Meeting. Friends received the report. Meeting APPROVED the WG's proposal that, in light of funds on hand and foreseeable needs, third-Sunday collections be suspended until further notice. @

201012.9 Treasurer's Report

Mike Simkin brought the monthly report of IMM's finances. As of the end of November, only 63% of budgeted donations had been received. Outlay has exceeded income so far by about \$10,000. After the year's end, Finance Committee will evaluate how much we will need to keep in reserve funds to cover potential cash flow gaps in the operating budget. Friends received the report. @

201012.10 Other Concerns

A Friend expressed concern about how the Nominating process integrates, or fails to integrate, volunteers. The matter was referred to Nominating Committee.

Eighteen Friends settled into worship at 2:55 PM before adjourning. Our next regular Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business, and our Annual Meeting, will be held at the rise of Meeting in Anabel Taylor Hall on January 9, 2011.

*Respectfully Submitted,  
Nancy Gabriel, Recording Clerk*

## Advices & Queries from NYM Faith & Practice

*Advice 1. From the beginnings of our Society, we have considered it necessary to assemble frequently for the purpose of public worship held in expectant waiting for divine guidance, thereby manifesting our belief in and dependence upon our creator. Meeting for worship is fundamental for us, and we should be diligent and punctual in our attendance. We seek, through communion with God, the strengthening influence of the Holy Spirit to enable us to discharge with fidelity the services we owe to God, to each other, and to all people.*

*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?*

*Query 8. Have we confronted our own decisions about our use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs, and do we encourage others to do likewise? Have we considered the cost in human suffering that might result from such use?*

## January 2011 Calendar of Ithaca Monthly Meeting

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

### Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business Sunday, January 9, Rise of Meeting

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

### The Joy of Clerking Committees Tuesday, January 11, 7:15p

Steve Mohlke will facilitate a discussion on clerking committees at the Burt House. See page 2 for more information.

### Peace Witness Committee Saturday, January 15, 10:30a

All are welcome to gather at the Burt House for Peace Witness.

### What Difference Does Membership Make? Sunday, January 16, Rise of Meeting

As Patricia Loring has written, we need a vision of membership as a “life-long process...of spiritual maturing or transformation.” Tom Gates writes about the stages members may go through in their spiritual development and challenges us “to lift up a corporate vision of spiritual community, where we are truly “Members one of another.” We hope you will join us to learn about membership as an important – perhaps critical – step in our journeys as Quakers.

### Women’s Fellowship Friday, January 20, 7p

Please join us at 7pm at the Ithaca Bakery, 400 N. Meadow Street. All are welcome. Have dinner or tea or baked goods... or not.

### State of the Meeting Report Sunday, January 30, Rise of Meeting

Monthly Meetings are called each year to prepare a State of the Meeting report which, according to Faith and Practice, “should be a searching self-examination by the meeting and its members of their spiritual strengths and weaknesses and of the efforts made to foster growth in the spiritual life.” Please join us at to examine with us the state of our Meeting.

### Every Sunday

- 11:00a Meeting for Worship for all ages
- 11:15a Children and adults participating in First Day School gather outside the Edwards Room..

### 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