



Newsletter of the

Ithaca Monthly Meeting

of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

November 2018

IMM CONTACTS

ithacamonthlymeeting.org

Meetinghouse:

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607-229-9500

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Friends Center for Racial Justice at the Burrth House, 227 N Willard Way

Angela Hopkins
angela@fcrj.org
607-319-2644

Listserv:

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

IMMRSF-L-request@cornell.edu
with message body as simply: join

Marilyn's List:

To email Friends and others non-specifically Quaker messages that may be of interest to Friends, consider sending your message through Marilyn Ray. To join or contribute, email:
mlr17@cornell.edu

Newsletter

Submit contributions to clarkberg@cornell.edu. See the IMM Calendar, back page, for the next deadline.

Get Your Quake On with Quaker Eights

Quaker Eights (also sometimes known as Friendly Eights) are informal gatherings, typically for a simple meal (usually potluck) and fellowship, with other members and attenders. Groups consist of approximately eight people who meet approximately eight times. This is a fun way to get to know others in the Meeting better in a more intimate setting.

For more information about how this all works and for a small FAQ on Quaker Eights gatherings, visit the Quaker Eights registration page here:

<https://goo.gl/forms/1BupbibTxHDBX3nr1>

The registration deadline is November 4, to enable groups to get their first 1-2 meetings scheduled before the end of the year. These groups will run through June 2019. We'll reassign the groups again next fall!

— Gina Varrichio

Dispatch from Earth

We sometimes forget, and it is good to remember, that we in our solar system are spinning within spinning within spinning—like Sufi dancers whirling or Van Gogh paintings spiraling—as we sit here so seemingly still. And our bodies carry the echoes of it.

We all know our planet Earth rotates around its axis dividing our 24-hour day into night and light. While, at the same time, we revolve around the sun, being pulled by its gravitational force into a flat plane of orbit for 365 and a fraction days which define our year (and leap year). Because the Earth's axis is not perpendicular to this flat plane but tilted, we have the seasons that give us a break from the perennial cold the more extreme latitudes would otherwise have. The real pole-to-pole line forms a 23.4 degree difference from this perpendicular—an angle that diminishes to zero where the two lines cross each other near the equator to form a lopsided "X." As the Earth orbits its annual path around the sun, the variability in direct sunlight received near the poles creates continual darkness there in the winter and the continual light in summer. We, on our more southerly speck of the northern hemisphere, experience this less dramatically in shortened days.

But the spinning doesn't stop with our solar system. We also orbit our galaxy. The Milky Way contains over 200 billion other stars exploding, living, and dying, and our solar system lives in one of the galaxy arms spiraling out from and rotating around the black hole at the galaxy center.

Meanwhile, closer to home, the moon we love to see at night is spinning too. Synchronized with Earth, the two embrace each other with magnetic attraction. We see only one side of the moon because its orbit and rotation are the same—around 27 days—slowed by the earth's gravity, while the moon pulls on the earth. The moon bulges out the oceans causing the rhythm of the tides. The familiar phases of the moon begin when the dark "new" moon is positioned between Earth and Sun, whose light reflects off the side we don't see.

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Dispatch from Earth, continued from page 1

The tides follow these phases because the line-up of moon and sun and their united gravitational pull cause higher “spring” tides for a moon full or new, and lower “neap” tides for a moon in its quarter phases.

We humans, along with the other plants and animals living on Earth, have evolved within these cosmic cycles, and our biology reflects them. Circadian rhythms release hormones and affect our 24-hour wake/sleep cycle. Flowers open and close by day and night. Seasonal cycles affect animal hibernation and human bodily responses, as we living here in Ithaca only too well understand. Deciduous plants and trees lose their leaves and become dormant in winter when their energies descend to their roots, and, finally, spring returns us to the joy of rebirth and the sun’s stronger light. The moon’s orbit around earth and its phase changes match the menstrual cycle and ovulation of the human female (monthly average is 28 days). And, though the influence is hormonal, many would say that the beauty of the lunar cycle affects us mentally and mythically as well. Perhaps, like the tides, we too feel the gravitational pull. And like the rest of the cosmos, we too are parts of stardust.

— *Betsy Keokosky, on behalf of the Earthcare Committee*

Join Us for a Blanket Sewing Bee

Every year people in Meeting donate to the Elves to make sure local children get things they need and want for Christmas - many thanks to Gina Varrichio for making this happen. One child was asked what she wanted and replied “a warm blanket.” That inspired the Elves to get together and sew blankets to give to children who need them.

Come join us in sewing blankets to keep children warm. And please let the organizer Joanna Bock <joanna@htva.net> know if you can make it so she can make sure there’s enough space and machines..

— *Kris Altucher*

Seminar on Wheels: An Exploration of Racial Injustice, Feb 16-23

An intergenerational exploration of historical sites from Ithaca to Montgomery, visiting the national memorial for Peace and Justice (also known as the National Lurching Museum) and The Legacy Museum: from enslavement to mass incarceration.

This bus trip will be a place where, together for seven days, fifty people study, live, discuss, learn and intensively explore the history and modern antecedents of slavery in America. This trip will have a strong faith focus, a spiritual exercise and opportunity in racial reconciliation. Sponsored by The Friends Center for Racial Justice and the First Presbyterian Church of Ithaca

Please consider, research, and discern if you feel led to take this opportunity. If so please let me know before it is officially advertised; (607)319-2644.

— *Angela Hopkins*

Peace and Social Justice Committee Presentation: Quakers in Palestine-Israel

On Sunday November 11 at 9:15 (see Calendar, back page), Julia Ganson will speak informally and lead discussion on the historical and current roles of Quaker groups in Israel and Palestine. She will talk about her participation in Ramallah Friends Meeting, as well as visits, meetings and interviews with staff at American Friends Service Committee in Jerusalem and peace organizations with whom AFSC has strong partnerships. One focus will be on AFSC’s history in Palestine and Israel since 1947, beginning with their UN mandate to set up and run the first Palestinian refugee camps in Gaza, and their subsequent decision to end that particular role.

Julia lived and worked in occupied Palestine (West Bank) for 10 months last year as part of a Fulbright Teaching & Research Award at Birzeit University near Ramallah. The revitalized and restructured Peace and Social Justice Committee (from two separate groups to one combined committee) held a retreat in October and is meeting regularly on the second Sunday of each month, directly after rise of Meeting. We welcome whoever is keen, to join us in the planning and activities.

Feed My Starving Children: Thank You!

To the 20ish Friends that joined us on Friday, October 12, 3-5pm to pack meals for hungry children overseas. Friends were part of 96 volunteers participating in the same two-hour timeslot at the Feed My Starving Children Ithaca Mobile Pack (fmsc.org), a project of Area Congregations Together (ACT). During our shift alone, volunteers were able to pack enough meals to sustain 69 children for an entire year. And check out some of our smiling faces!

— *Gina Varrichio*

12 Step Quaker Weekend, Nov 30 - Dec 2

Before attending or joining a 12-step group, many people describe the feelings of loneliness or separation that plagued them. One of the biggest gifts 12-step groups offer individuals is an end to that isolation and a feeling of being part of something greater than themselves. During our retreat we will share the experience, strength, and hope we gained by joining our respective fellowships. Be it spirituality, miracles in action, a feeling of receiving grace, or a soothing sense of serenity, we will plan to share aspects of our personal journeys, along with how we stay connected to hope, joy, love, and each other.

Facilitator: Annie R first encountered the image and concept of Lonesome No More (from Kurt Vonnegut’s book, *Slapstick*) when just a teenager, and knows it is part of the cosmic alignment that guided her into the AA fellowship more than 27 years ago. From the start, Annie’s theme song has been “Amazing Grace.” She looks forward to sharing another Quaker Retreat at Powell House with her fellow travelers as they come together in love.

Register by November 16: \$280-200/adults; \$125/ages 13-22; \$70/infants-12; \$175/commuters

After November 16: \$260/\$145/\$90/\$195

Listening Circles Workshop, Jan 25-27, 2019

For building relationship and transforming conflict

When conflict reveals itself, it often feels like both an institutional and a personal crisis. Quaker meetings, like any other organism, can become paralyzed by fear and distrust when conflict occurs, whether openly or in the background. We may respond with worry, hyper-vigilance, hand-wringing, and confusion. Frequently, we try to ignore or smooth over the ruffled feelings, only to find the conflict resurfacing in unexpected ways.

Caught up in our reactions, we often forget that conflict is a normal and integral part of all dynamic organizations and relationships. It can be an indication of people feeling safe to be authentic and to take risks. Addressed creatively and confidently, it can be transforming. The practice of skillfully addressing conflict is grounded in the experience of the divine: that we are meant to love and be loved in our entirety, to see and be seen with compassion, complete with the parts that ache for healing. The practice expresses the truth of the transforming power of God in our lives.

This workshop is for people who are ready to help their meetings—and themselves—grow less fear-driven and more whole. One approach that has been helpful in a wide range of settings, including Quaker meetings, is the circle process. Circle processes have ancient roots in human history. They are used for many reasons—to celebrate, to grieve, to tell stories, to acknowledge harm, to address conflicts, and more. Circle processes are in harmony with Quaker faith and practice. Circles provide a structured way to follow our practices of deep listening and of seeking connection through that of God in ourselves and others.

Heather Cook and Karen Reixach are members of the New York Yearly Meeting Conflict Transformation Committee and have been trained in circle process by Kay Pranis, a leading trainer in this restorative justice practice. They have done a number of conflict transformation trainings, including at Woolman Hill, All Friends Maine conference, and the FGC Gathering. They see the work of a facilitator as creating a vessel where Friends feel comfortable, empowered, and inspired to participate fully; drawing out the wisdom of the group; being equipped with more than simply good intentions; and helping participants connect dots, build bridges, and rise up changed. Heather is a member of Central Finger Lakes Meeting, NYYM, and Karen is a member of Ithaca Meeting, NYYM.

Program cost of \$225 includes program, meals and accommodation. Sliding scale and scholarships available.

WOOLMAN HILL, Quaker Retreat Center, 107 Keets Road, Deerfield MA 01342. 413-774-3431. www.woolmanhill.org, info@woolmanhill.org, www.Facebook.com/WoolmanHill

— *Karen Reixach*

From the Archives

Report of Peace Committee, May 10, 1954

In presenting this Annual Report of the Peace Committee it is only fair to state that much work on behalf of the cause of Peace has been done by individuals of the Meeting not on the Committee.

The Peace Committee met with Wm. Mendenhall ten days before the A.F.S.C.

Institute for International Relations in order to make places for publicizing the meetings. Wm. Mendenhall was very cooperative and helpful in making suggestions. Through the efforts of the committee, posters were placed in numerous college buildings, a splendid write up was printed in the Ithaca Journal and the Broadcasting station W.H.C.U. gave out spot flashes daily and several times a day listing the Institute. The Institute was quite well attended though not so many townspeople came considering the amount of advertising done.

Later in the year a poster was put on the bulletin board at Anabel Taylor advising men liable to Military draft when they might receive counseling if they felt they had Conscientious Objections to Military Service. Other copies of the Poster were placed also in some other Cornell buildings.

During the spring arrangements were made for an address and discussion on the subject of Disarmament. On April 8th a Public meeting was held in the Activity Room Anabel Taylor Hall where Emily Parker Simons gave the address and led the discussion. Preceding the address the film "The Earth is Rich" was shown.

Easter Sunday the committee asked permission of the meeting to send telegrams to President Eisenhower and Secretary Dulles regarding the inconsistency of the Easter spirit and the dependence on Hydrogen Bombs for protection and security. The meeting was united in taking such action.

A member of the meeting, not on the present Peace Committee, drafted the following excellent telegram to be sent to both the President and the

Secretary:

May you find in Easter and the days that follow, the vision and Christian strength to lead us from dependence on hydrogen bombs to human bonds of fellowship and love with all people.

Respectfully submitted,

Theodore Oliver, Chairman.

— *Simon St. Laurent, Meeting Historian*

Cornell Elves: Let's Make Backpacks

This year we yet again participated in the Cornell Elves backpack program, providing backpacks and school supplies to those youth in our community that need them. This year, though we had to work fast, Ithaca Monthly Meeting provided 11 backpacks filled with supplies to children in the South Seneca School District. These backpacks were part of the 1224 total backpacks provided across Tompkins and neighboring counties.

We are now collecting donations for the Cornell Elves holiday program. Checks made out to Ithaca Monthly Meeting this year with Elves in the memo line. Mail donations to Ithaca Monthly Meeting, Attn: Mike Simkin, 120 Third St., Ithaca, NY 14850. Want to make a cash donation? Find Gina Varrichio, Melissa Travis Dunham, or Mike Simkin and give us your dough!

For more information on the Cornell Elves program, visit <http://elves.cornell.edu/index.html>.

Young Adult Spiritual Nurture Series

If you're between the ages of 18 and 35(ish), there are six exciting one-day and weekend workshops in the Young Adult Spiritual Nurture Series. Check them out! Here are the first three:

- Residential Kick-Off Weekend: Living Faithfully in and as Community, Evening October 19 - Lunch October 21, Quaker Intentional Village-Canaan (QIVC)
- One-Day Mini Retreat: The Intersection of Faith and Everything Else, December 1, Fifteenth Street Monthly Meeting, NYC
- One-Day Mini Retreat: What is Discernment? Quaker Decision-Making in the 21st Century, February 24, (Following Meeting for Discernment on Saturday) Poughkeepsie Monthly Meeting, Poughkeepsie, NY

See youngadultfriends.weebly.com to register.

All workshops are pay-as-led. Scholarships, childcare, transportation stipends, and hospitality will be available for all workshops. Please let us know if there is anything else you need in order to join us!

Ithaca Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

Monthly Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business, October 14, 2018

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 on file with and available from the Clerk or Recording Clerk.)

2018.10.1 Opening Worship

Ithaca Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends met in Monthly Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business on October 14, 2018. At 12:15pm, sixteen Friends gathered and settled into worship.

"May words of the Spirit be spoken, and words of the Spirit be heard."

Clerk recognized Gina Varrichio who was holding the Meeting in the Light.

Instead of a reading, Clerk shared a thought about "cutting away from the vine to allow for new growth," an admonition derived from the Gospel of John, Chapter 15. Clerk raised this thought as a query for those gathered to rest with as the meeting began.

2018.10.2 Finance Committee

IMM Finance Committee was asked to assess the best way to account for un-budgeted capital improvements and other unexpected expenditures in our bookkeeping. Antonia Saxon read the minute.

Chuck Mohler, Finance Committee, Mike Simkin, Treasurer and others with specific knowledge related to the budget answered questions asked. Clerk described the rationale for the original request, as well as Quakerly considerations for good financial transparency moving forward.

As a result of this discussion, the minute derived from the Finance Committee assessment was considered a good start, but not yet complete. Those present requested that it be sent back to the Finance Committee for more "seasoning," process clarification and input from the current and former IMM treasurers. Friends asked the Financial Committee to reconsider the minute with input from IMM's current and former treasurers. @

The meeting conducted a further discussion about submitting proper documentation of all expenditures. The treasurer reminded the meeting of the need for friends to become more familiar with the budget, where and how expenses will be accounted. @

2018.10.3 Library Committee

In response to a suggestion made via the Vital Meetings Survey for having more periodic reports from committees, Margaret McCasland was asked to bring the following draft report before the meeting for questions, comments, additions and/or revisions prior to its delivery to Third Street Meetinghouse Committee:

The Library Committee would like to have the downstairs library continue to be a multipurpose room, where the books, periodicals, pamphlets and handouts there be those materials most likely to circulate and/or be given away to promote both worship and witness activities within our Meeting.

However, we have also had many books, pamphlets and back issues of periodicals donated to us (some in boxes at the TSMH and some still at the Burt House, which is now serving as the FCRJ and so no longer an appropriate location for IMM books and pamphlets). This collection gives us the basis for a wonderful research library, but is not appropriate for housing in the downstairs library.

Minutes continued on page 5

Minutes continued from page 4

The Library Committee would like to store books and pamphlets (especially the Pendle Hill series) in a “library annex” upstairs, where they could be read when the room was not otherwise being used. Many of the items would also be available for circulation. If someone wanted to spend undisturbed time with the materials in the room, they would have to reserve the room on the Meeting calendar.

Either the Peace Room [aqua] or the Integrity Room [yellow] could fit several bookcases and still serve as a room for meetings and programs. We received some bookcases from Lynn Grove’s estate which could be used. The presence of library materials in the room would not inhibit any of its current uses. Having the materials in a “multi-use” space would increase their role in the life of the Meeting.

We have been discussing this possibility with various people in IMM for some time now, but would like to make an official request to the TSMH Committee to start moving books upstairs into the room they designate as most appropriate.

The Library Committee would then work with each of the Witness Committees, CALM, and Ministry and Worship to set up the materials relevant to their work in the most appropriate ways in the downstairs Library.

Various questions were asked and answered, and a call for input and help from the membership was made. Friends expressed general unity around the proposal to use TSM’s upstairs rooms as a library annex. @

Friends received the report. @

2018.10.4 Nominating Committee

On behalf of the Nominating Committee, Antonia Saxon updated the membership on the Committee’s request for all committees to update their charges. Friends were asked to share any special gifts or talents they may bring to meeting with a member of the nominating committee (Antonia Saxon, Pat Sewell, Pat Pingel, Marin Clarkberg or Karen Reixach). Friends received the report. @

2018.10.5 Peace & Social Justice Committee

On behalf of the Peace & Social Justice Committee, Carol Clarke read the following report detailing the Committee’s various activities, donations, attendance and consistent meeting time:

In 2018 the Peace & Social Justice Committee has made financial contributions to the Alliance of Families for Justice, the Peter DeMott Peace Trot, the Poor Peoples’ Campaign, and the Ithaca Catholic Worker community. Every Monday since Hiroshima Day, August 6, members of the Committee have been standing vigil between 5pm and 6pm holding signs in support of immigrants, such as ‘Families Belong Together’ and ‘Immigrant Children Still Separated from their Parents’ at the corner of Cayuga and Green St outside the library. This action is gaining momentum as we get more and more expressions of support from people walking and driving or riding by, and Friends from outside the committee and people from the community have joined us in the vigil in the last 2 weeks.

We submitted a minute that was approved to display signs here at the Meetinghouse that say ‘Love Thy Neighbor, No Exceptions’ and ‘No Matter Where You Are From, We’re Glad You’re Our Neighbor’ in Spanish, Arabic and English, and are in the process of ordering the signs. We have ordered additional copies of *White Fragility* by Robin DiAngeli for our library and look forward to participating in discussion groups. We had our annual retreat on September 23 where we got to know each other better and shared information about our individual callings and discussed intentions for 2019. We’ve had 6-8 Friends attending our meetings lately after a summer lull. Members of the Committee are also individually doing the organizational work for the OAR ministry, which provides rides for people to prison visits (over half the drivers are members of Meeting), acting as facilitator in the AVP work in Elmira prison, and overseeing the work of the Ad Hoc Working Group for Refugee Support.

Friends received the report. @

2018.10.6 Treasurer’s Report

Mike Simkin, treasurer reported on the general financial health of the meeting. Specifically, he reported we have received 40% of IMM’s donation amount for the year, leaving 60% still to be collected before year’s end. This is typical of most years. Additionally, Mike reported on the status of engaging a bookkeeper for IMM.

Friends received the report with gratitude. @

2018.10.7 Other Concerns

A member, who wishes to put together Quaker 8s groups, asked to whom this request should be directed. This request was immediately referred to Ministry & Worship.

A friend requested that any percolating thoughts about the use of the Third Street Meetinghouse be directed to the Committee as they arise.

A request was made for electronic availability of expenditure documentation forms to facilitate Committees’ discernment of expenditures in advance of making them.

In an effort to maintain the momentum of the Vital Meetings Project, a friend shared that all are welcome and encouraged to join the Partnership Circle to explore ideas and concerns. If anyone is interested in being part of this group, they are asked to contact John Lewis, Bronwyn Mohlke, Ellie Rosenberg or Angela Hopkins.

2018.10.8 Closing Worship

Sixteen Friends settled into silent worship at 1:39pm before adjourning. Our next regular Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business will be held at the rise of Meeting on November 11, 2018.

Respectfully submitted,

Blair Jennings

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. No experience or equipment needed. If you have questions, please contact Nancy Gabriel: 339-7123; ntg2@cornell.edu. We offer a donation to the teacher.

Vigil to Support Immigrants Mondays 5-6p

Please join us for our regular weekly vigil in support of immigrants outside the Tompkins County Public Library on the corner of Cayuga and Green St.

November 2018 Calendar of Ithaca Monthly Meeting

Quaker Guys Lunch

Thursday, November 1, noon to 1:30p

Lunch for Friendly Men and those who don't mind talking with them. We meet at the Ten Forward Café in Autumn Leaves at 12 noon on the first Thursday of each month.

Friends First Friday Films

Friday, November 2, 7p

Join us at the Friends' Center for Racial Justice, 227 N Willard Way. This month we're showing "The Pursuit of Happyness" starring Will Smith. This Oscar nominated film is based on a true story, includes homelessness, child custody, and heartfelt relationships. Suggestions for future films? Contact Ruth Yarrow or Angela Hopkins.

Women's Fellowship

Friday, November 9, 6:45p

A Friendly, informal gathering to meet, knit, eat and/or hang out once a month, we will meet in Wegman's cafe upstairs. Stop by for a cup of tea, dinner, or just to say hi, everyone is welcome!

Quakers in Palestine-Israel Presentation

Sunday, November 11, 9:15a

Julia Ganson will speak informally and lead discussion on the historical and current roles of Quaker groups in Israel and Palestine. See page 2 for more information.

Singing Before Meeting

Sunday, November 11, 9:30a

Emily Williams lead singing before worship. If you can't make it at 9:30, come a little later. We'll wrap up by 10:15 to settle for MfW.

Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business

Sunday, November 11, Rise of Meeting

Join the Quaker decision-making process. Proposed agenda items should be sent to our clerk, John Lewis, by the preceding Monday.

Peace & Social Justice Committee

Sunday, November 18, Rise of Meeting

All are welcome to discuss Peace & Social Justice work.

Vegetarian Thanksgiving

Thursday, November 22, 4p

Join Friends for a dish-to-pass, casual Thanksgiving dinner with fellowship at the Third Street Meetinghouse. All dishes should be vegetarian.

Newsletter submission due

Friday, November 23, 5p

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

Dish-to-Pass Brunch

Sunday, November 25, Rise of Meeting

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

On Sundays

10:30a **First Day School** upstairs at the Third Street Meetinghouse

10:30a **Meeting for Worship** at the Third Street Meetinghouse

11:15a **First Day School attendees** join Meeting for Worship

Other Weekly IMM Events

Mid-week Meeting at the Burt House

Wednesdays at 7:30p

The Burt House is at 227 North Willard Way, Ithaca.