



Newsletter of the

# Ithaca Monthly Meeting

of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

**December 2019**

## **IMM CONTACTS**

**ithacamonthlymeeting.org**

### **Meetinghouse:**

120 Third Street • Ithaca NY 14850  
607-229-9500

To reserve space, email:  
ithacamonthlymeeting@gmail.com

### **Clerk:**

John Lewis • 607-227-6273  
clerk@ithacamonthlymeeting.org

### **Assistant Clerk:**

Bronwyn Mohlke • 607-220-3219  
BJQMohlke@gmail.com

### **Treasurer:**

Mike Simkin  
607-387-5174 • mes13@cornell.edu

### **Ministry & Worship:**

Elizabeth Schneider  
607-351-0057 • nschneid@aol.com

### **Childcare Requests:**

Ellie Rosenberg • 277-1403  
ellierosenberg7@gmail.com

### **Friends Center for Racial Justice at the Burt 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.

## **On the Uses of the Meetinghouse**

A before-worship meeting about meetinghouse use was held on November 24. The IMM calendar-keeper and the Third Street Meetinghouse Committee have been making decisions about requests to use the meetinghouse on a case-by-case basis. The desire for guidelines to help with decision-making was expressed at November's Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business.

The group that met on November 24 voiced deep gratitude for the fact that Ithaca Monthly Meeting has this precious resource it has been able to share with so many community groups. Letting other groups use the meetinghouse is a form of outreach for the Meeting. There is a perception that decisions about use are most complicated when they involve groups with missions that are not aligned with Quaker testimonies. This is not the case. It emerged during the meeting that other problems arise more often. Questions about activities that charge money for participation, uses that don't seem appropriate for the space, groups with inadequate supervision, or groups whose demands for silence or whose music-making make concurrent use impossible are only some of the problems that the TSMC has faced when trying to accommodate requests. The guidelines should anticipate and address these kinds of situations.

The ad hoc committee (Ellie Rosenberg, Marilyn Ray, Melody Johnson and Antonia Saxon) will carry this concern forward and will create a simple guideline draft for further discernment. Comments can be directed to any of the ad hoc committee members.

— Antonia Saxon

## **Meetinghouse Reservation Changes**

As of December 1, 2019 the Third Street Meetinghouse space reservations will be transferred from Dick Crepeau, who has faithfully and single-handedly filled this need since we've had this Meetinghouse, to Carol Clarke. We are deeply indebted to Dick for his many years of service in this task and are pleased to be able to give him a well-earned retirement from this work.

With the changing in staffing, there will be some slight changes in the process for reserving space at Third Street Meetinghouse. For most requests, please continue to reserve space by emailing IthacaMonthlyMeeting@gmail.com. This email address is listed on our website and in the newsletter each month.

To reserve space for committee meetings or other small group discussions within Ithaca Meeting, we're introducing an online form that will basically let people in Meeting add their own meetings to the calendar.

A few notes about using the new online form:

1. The form is only for reserving the small rooms upstairs, the library, or the kitchen. If you want to use the Meetingroom or more than one room at a time, please email IthacaMonthlyMeeting@gmail.com

2. You must look at the calendar to verify that the space you wish to use is available before filling out the form. The form isn't smart enough to know if a room is already in use.
3. The form asks whether the meeting is a recurring event to collect this information, but doesn't automatically add the future meetings to the calendar. Carol will watch these automated reservations and add the new recurring reservations regularly. If you know your committee will be meeting weekly or monthly at the same time, go ahead and reserve for the first meeting and just email [IthacaMonthlyMeeting@gmail.com](mailto:IthacaMonthlyMeeting@gmail.com) to let Carol know it's a recurring meeting.

4. You may also continue to reserve space for IMM meetings by emailing [IthacaMonthlyMeeting@gmail.com](mailto:IthacaMonthlyMeeting@gmail.com).

We will also send the link to this form over the IMM listserv. Feel free to save the link on your device as a favorite, etc. Please only use this form for IMM events and gatherings. Eventually, this form will be available on the IMM website in a private space, internal to IMM. If you would like to be emailed a link to the form in the future, please email [IthacaMonthlyMeeting@gmail.com](mailto:IthacaMonthlyMeeting@gmail.com) to request a link to the form.

— *Third Street Meetinghouse Committee*

## Friends Center for Racial Justice (FCRJ)

Please watch for the 2020 FCRJ schedule -- it will be out in January. Its publishing will be noted on the Meeting list serve.

FCRJ will be cosponsoring the screening of a film, *Power to Heal*, on the evening of January 29 at Cinemapolis (see page 3). This film tells a poignant chapter in the historic struggle to secure equal and adequate access to healthcare for all Americans. Central to the story is the tale of how a new national program, Medicare, was used to mount a dramatic, coordinated effort that desegregated thousands of hospitals across the country practically overnight. Much of the film focuses on how Black people were denied health care for decades. Today, subtle often invisible tactics are still used to continue this discrimination.

In October at FCRJ's Annual Meeting, the text of New York Yearly Meeting's Apology to Afro-Descendants was read and a discussion ensued. This Apology was approved at Fall Sessions in 2013, November 17. It was agreed that it is worthwhile to look at documents and minutes after time has passed to see how we are living into them, and how we might further live into them. New York Yearly Meeting Clerk, Jeffrey Aaron, encourages all Friends to attend Coordinating Committee Weekend, Jan 24-26 at Powell House. It is not a business meeting where Friends make decisions but a time when Friends can gather to discuss the common areas of concern and discernment. Friends can simply listen and observe or participate as led. This gathering is happening during the

325th anniversary of the New York Yearly Meeting. Below is the text of the 2013 Apology:

We the New York Yearly Meeting (NYYM) of the Religious Society of Friends apologize to Afro-Descendants\* everywhere for Quaker participation in the terrible acts of enslaving your ancestors and for the destructive effects that those acts have had on succeeding generations.

Slavery is an abomination. We regret that Friends participated in or benefited from slavery. This included trafficking of human beings from Africa, capitalizing on the products of their labor and suffering, and being enriched by an economy based on chattel slavery. We apologize that NYYM allowed its members to hold Africans and their descendants in bondage up until 1777, when Friends were directed by the Yearly Meeting to manumit the people they held in slavery.

We abhor the decades of terror and legalized racial segregation that followed the abolition of slavery declared in the 13th amendment, which was ratified in 1865. The amendment reads: "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction." This exception gave rise to a justice system that disproportionately targeted and incarcerated Afro-Descendants, a practice which continues today.

We acknowledge in sorrow that those of us who enjoy a high standard of living today are still benefiting from the unpaid and underpaid labor of enslaved peoples and their descendants. We deeply regret that even after emancipation, despite the Quaker testimony of equality, Friends schools denied admission to Afro-Descendants and many Friends meetings enforced segregated seating. We regret the effects that those policies had and continue to have on all of us.

Over the centuries, some individual Quakers and Quaker groups have joined efforts to end slavery and eradicate racism and have supported African Americans in their struggle for civil and human rights. We honor the work of these Quakers and are moved to follow their example. Thus we re-commit ourselves to the testimony of equality as regards Afro-Descendants. This work will include challenging existing racist assumptions, and educating ourselves about the direct relationships between the past enslavement of Afro-Descendants and current conditions in the United States.

We recognize that this apology is a step towards healing and trust, and that more openings will follow as we strive with *divine* assistance to discern what we as Quakers are called to do to bring about justice and reconciliation in our beloved community.

Note that Afro-Descendants is a term now officially in use by the United Nations to identify the more than 250 million descendants of enslaved Africans dwelling in North America, Latin America, the Caribbean, and the Slavery Diaspora.

— *Elizabeth Schneider*

## At the Beginning: Edward and Marianne Wood Family

IMM records show that Edward Wood (1853-1936) and wife Marianne V. Wood (1863-1940) moved from the Jacksonville area to Ithaca in 1912 and started a Friends worship group in their home which moved to Barnes Hall at Cornell a year or so later, and eventually evolved into Ithaca Monthly Meeting. Oral history indicated that the reason for the move was that Edward and Marianne had a son who wanted to go to Cornell and the family moved into town to be near the campus. A recent search of the archives of the Ithaca Journal has largely confirmed the oral history. The Woods' daughter, Sarah W. Oliver (1892-1973), was a long-time member of IMM and is still remembered by a few of us.

The son, George D. Wood, attended the Westtown School, and graduated from Cornell in 1920. As a student in Arts and Sciences, he was editor of the Cornell Widow, a humor magazine published from 1894 through the 1960s, and he played on the Cornell soccer team. He then graduated from the American Institute of Banking and pursued course work in the Wharton School of Finance at the University of Pennsylvania. He became a sergeant in the Ambulance Corps, 78<sup>th</sup> Division, during World War I and after the armistice took a four-month course at the University de Montpelier in southern France. He then worked for the Provident Mutual Life Insurance Co. of Philadelphia and lived in Moorestown, NJ. He transferred his membership from the Hector Monthly Meeting (HMM) to Moorestown in 1922. George was also president of the Westtown alumni association and served as a member of the AFSC. He died in 1948.

Edward Wood was born in the Jacksonville area, the son of George and Martha Wood. The family, including Edward's brother, Arthur, were members of HMM. Edward and Marianne stayed active in HMM for a number of years after moving to Ithaca. Edward was clerk of HMM for several years up to and including 1922. (IMM did not become a Monthly Meeting until 1938.) The Woods had a fruit farm while they lived in the Jacksonville area. After they moved to 238 Linden Avenue—currently a hole with some con-

struction equipment<sup>1</sup>—near the Cornell campus, Edward worked as a taxi driver using a seven-passenger vehicle he purchased in 1914, and later as a janitor for the CU College of Agriculture. He and Marianne also operated a rooming house at the above address.

Marianne Valentine Wood was born in Ontario, Canada. Her parents immigrated from Ireland to Canada. Marianne was active in Canada Yearly Meeting during her years in the Ithaca area and periodically attended Friends events in Toronto and Pickering. She was active here in the local chapter of the Woman's Christian Temperance Movement and gave talks periodically on peace concerns.

Edward and Marianne's grave stones are in the cemetery behind the Hector Meetinghouse. Upon Marianne's death in 1940, the following memorial minute appeared in the IMM minutes:

Marianne V. Wood with her husband Edward Wood started the Ithaca Meeting of Friends and gave freely of themselves to its interests. He was head of the Meeting for years and her vocal ministry was always helpful and filled with the peace she received from dwelling in the shadow of her Master's throne. Her helpful suggestions contributed much to the building up of the Meeting. Her kindly concern for each individual endeared her to us all. We shall miss her saintly presence and the sermon of her life will linger with us.

To hold life only for the sake of giving,  
To find in loss a gain, in gain a loss,  
This is the paradox of Christian living,  
The venture of the Cross.

— Tom Brown, Meeting Historian

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1 The property recently sold for \$1.35M. The Oliver estate (238 Linden Ave.) was left by Theodore at his death in December 1978 to IMM. After various closing costs and funeral expenses, IMM realized about \$53,300 net in 1979. (This money seeded a fund known for years afterward as the Oliver Fund).

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## Upcoming Memorials for Friends

Marion DaGrossa

Saturday, December 7, 11:00 a.m. at the Unitarian Church

Will White

Sunday, December 8, 2:00 pm at the Third Street Meetinghouse; see the calendar on page 6.

Ann Rhodin

Late April or early May, at the Third Street Meetinghouse.

## Power to Heal showing at Cinemopolis

Save the Date: January 29, 7pm,

Power to Heal is an hour long documentary that tells a poignant chapter in the historic struggle to secure equal access to healthcare for all Americans—a struggle over healthcare from a half-century ago—raises questions that resonate today: is healthcare a human right? Must the federal government intervene to ensure equality? [www.blbfilmproductions.com/](http://www.blbfilmproductions.com/)

A panel and Q&A will follow the film.

Co-Sponsors: Friends Center for Racial Justice, Calvary Baptist Church, Dorthy Cotton Institute, Finger Lakes for NY Health, SURG (Standing Up for Racial Justice)

For more information, contact Carolyn Kenyon at [clkenyon09@gmail.com](mailto:clkenyon09@gmail.com)



Some of the fifty Friends who shared a Vegetarian Thanksgiving dinner, fellowship, and board games.



### Catholic Worker Seeks Resident

The Ithaca NY Catholic Worker community is looking for a resident for its house of hospitality on S. Plain St. For over 25 years we have been engaged in organizing and non-violent resistance; currently we're focusing on drone warfare at Hancock Air Force base and the Plowshares action at King's Bay Naval base (see [www.kingsbayplowshares7.org](http://www.kingsbayplowshares7.org)).

We own a 3-bedroom house near downtown Ithaca that has provided housing and help to many low income people over the past 9 years.

Maybe you're feeling called to live in our Catholic Worker house, helping to shape the ministry of the house, to offer hospitality to people in need, and to get involved in the other activities of the Ithaca Catholic Worker. If so, we'd sure love to meet, talk and pray with you about it.

The caretaker pays an affordable rent and is responsible for upkeep of the three-bedroom house and yard, and invited (but not obliged) to continue tending the marvelous garden in the backyard. The caretaker is also be responsible for providing a welcoming space for weekly Catholic Worker meetings and other organizing meetings.

Please be in touch with us and pass this along to others who might fit well with the Catholic Worker philosophy.

[www.catholicworker.org/communities/directory-picker.html](http://www.catholicworker.org/communities/directory-picker.html)

[www.uscatholic.org/culture/social-justice/2011/09/house-work-catholic-worker-houses-toda](http://www.uscatholic.org/culture/social-justice/2011/09/house-work-catholic-worker-houses-toda)

House Committee Contacts:

Tom Joyce [tomjoyce51@aim.com](mailto:tomjoyce51@aim.com) 277-7426 (h); 275-9560 (w)

Leslie Schultz [LS30@cornell.edu](mailto:LS30@cornell.edu) 272-6482

Sara Pines [saraxpines@gmail.com](mailto:saraxpines@gmail.com) 272-6758

### Instagram.com/IMMRSF

After announcements have been written on the whiteboard, they are photographed and the photos are posted on Instagram. If you want to review that information, visit the website [Instagram.com/immrsf](https://www.instagram.com/immrsf).

### VOICES Concert Saturday, December 7 4pm

Melody Johnson and Bronwyn Mohlke are in the VOICES choir. There will be a concert called We Can Be Kind: Joy and Inspiration in Song. Saturday, December 7 at 4:00 pm at the Baptist Church, 309 N Cayuga Street. Tickets are \$15 in advance, or \$15 at the door. Visit <https://acithaca.org/groups/voices/tickets/>

It's going to be a fun concert, with instrumentalists in addition to the choir. Selections are from diverse cultural traditions and multiple languages ranging from classical choral arrangements to Gospel to Reggae with text in English, Sufi, Hebrew, Bosnian, Latin, and Zulu. An informal reception with refreshments follows the concert.

### Minutes, continued from page 5

to partner with another small congregation, the Living Hope Fellowship, to help once every seven weeks with food, transportation, laundry and companionship for people in sanctuary. The Committee did not feel able to commit at this time. People from our meeting may be able to connect as unaffiliated volunteers. Once there are individual(s) in sanctuary the meeting may be able to commit to specific tasks. Elizabeth also reported on the room available for sanctuary at the First Congregational Church; it is quite lovely. Friends received the report.

### 2019.11.7 Other Concerns

Committees have relied on the Treasurer to keep track of expenditures. Referred to Nominating Committee.

A gathering to consider criteria for use of the Third Street Meeting House and its implementation is scheduled for November 24 before meeting for worship. Ministry & Worship will organize this.

Ithaca Monthly Meeting now has three employees plus contractors. We may need to establish an entity to manage personnel. Referred to Trustees, the Finance and Nominating Committee to consult and report back to the meeting.

Closing worship.

— Karen Reixach

**Ithaca Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends**  
**Monthly Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business, November 10, 2019**

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

**2019.11.1 Opening Worship**

Holding us in the Light: Nancy Riffer and Nancy Gabriel

“Being peacemakers is essentially an affair of the heart, rather than of the mind. For whether a person decides to use the energies of [their] body and mind for building weapons and thinking the unthinkable, or whether a person dedicates [themselves] wholly to a search for peace, is probably ultimately determined by a quality of the heart for which the mind is but a servant.

“It is unlikely, therefore, that we shall debate each other, or our fellow citizens, into the ways of love. For we touch people’s hearts not by what we debate with them about, but rather by the quality of our being – by who we are, and by how we live, and by what we do. Thus, all our merely verbal efforts in education or politics have meaning only insofar as they spring out of our own very direct experience of joyfully seeing what love can do in practice.”

— *Daniel A. Seeger, 1986*

Nineteen individuals attended.

**2019.11.2 Question on NYYM Meeting for Discernment**

Bronwyn Mohlke, assistant clerk, summarized the request from New York Yearly Meeting to hold the winter Meeting for Discernment in Ithaca, sometime in February or March. Friends determined the room would hold 100 people and that we have enough chairs. Is there a the topic for discernment? It is rather like an extended meeting for worship with a focus on queries rather than a meeting for worship with a concern for business; the MfD Steering comes up with the focal area. Is weather a consideration for the date? Do we need a snow date?

We will need a host committee to coordinate and identify a date (and a snow date) as well as to organize hospitality. Bronwyn, Antonia, Carol Clarke, Michelle Brimage, Karen Reixach, Ellie Rosenberg, and Angela Hopkins volunteered for this committee. Others plan to offer places to stay and transportation.

Friends recognized the gift of this invitation and approved hosting the Meeting for Discernment.

**2019.11.3 Nominating Committee Report**

Pat Sewell, clerk of Nominating Committee, reported that the Committee recommends the following: Kris Altucher (Ministry and Worship, 2022); Nancy Riffer (Ministry and Worship, 2022); Simon St. Laurent (Library, 2022); Caitlin Feather (Library, 2022) and Ruth Yarrow (Representative to Friends Committee on National Legislation, 2022).

Friends approved these appointments, with a request for a full list of nominations in December.

**2019.11.4 Earthcare Committee – Donations**

Betsy Keokosky described the following organizations and recommends donations of \$100 each: Primitive Pursuits (a local organization), Groundswell Center for Local Food and Farming (local), Pachamama Drawdown Program - local chapter, Quaker Bolivia Link bio-sand filter funds, and Earthjustice.

Friends approved the recommended donations, with the understanding that the Treasurer will need to check on funds already expended and if necessary, the meeting will revisit the donations in December.

She reported that Earthcare has an additional \$500 to allocate at its discretion. The Committee has replaced its donation to Mothers Out Front with sponsorship for use of Meeting House for their meetings. Each of these groups will receive \$100: Discover Cayuga Lake (formerly Floating Classroom), Ithaca Children’s Garden, Cayuga Lake Watershed, Project Growing Hope Community Garden, and Indigenous Environmental Network.

**2019.11.5 Peace and Social Justice – Donations**

Elizabeth Schneider explained that Ithaca Monthly Meeting allots \$2,000 to the Peace and Social Justice Committee. \$1,000 must be approved by Meeting, with the remaining \$1,000 as discretionary funds for the Committee to decide.

She provided a description of each organization and is seeking approval for the following donations of \$100 each from the Social Justice Fund: College Initiative Upstate (CIU), National Religious Campaign Against Torture, New York Campaign for Alternatives to Isolated Confinement (CAIC), Prison Action Network, and Opportunities, Alternatives and Resources (OAR). Friends approved.

The Committee also requests Meeting approval for the following donations from the Peace Witness Funds: \$200 for Kids4Peace; \$200 for the Afghan Women’s Fund; and \$100 for the Al-Huda Islamic Center, Inc. Friends approved.

The following organizations received discretionary funds from the Peace and Social Action Committee discretionary funds: \$200 for the Friends Center for Racial Justice, \$200 for the First Congregational Church; and \$48 to purchase White Fragility book. (This latter purchase has actually been shifted to the Library Committee, thereby freeing up the \$48 for the Peace and Social Justice Committee discernment)

Peace Witness discretionary funds are allocated as: \$150 to Peter DeMott Catholic Worker House (already paid), and \$50 to for signs and banners for the weekly vigil on the immigration crisis.

**2019.11.6 Peace and Social Justice – Report on Sanctuary Alliance**

Elizabeth Schneider expressed concern with miscommunication between the Meeting and the Ithaca Sanctuary Alliance. She attended the Ithaca Sanctuary Alliance (eight congregations) last month and volunteered for the Peace & Social Justice Committee

*Minutes continued on page 4*

## **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. Schedule may vary, please contact Nancy Gabriel: 339-7123; ntg2@cornell.edu. We offer a donation to the teacher.

## **Yoga with Kris and/or Dreia, Sundays at 6p**

The Community Yoga class taught by Kris Altucher and Dreia at the meetinghouse on Sundays will be moving to 6pm downstairs at the meetinghouse.

This class is intended for *all levels* and *all are welcome* regardless of current flexibility or fitness levels, or previous experience. Bring a mat if you have one; we have a few extras. Donations accepted.

Yoga contributes to strength, flexibility, balance, and peace of mind. Hope to see you there!

# **December 2019 Calendar of Ithaca Monthly Meeting**

## **QuakerSpeak! discussion Sunday, December 1, 9:30a**

First and third Sundays, Friends will gather in the library to watch a QuakerSpeak video and discuss. QuakerSpeak is a video series on YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/user/Quakerspeak>. Come once or every time. This is a lovely, low key way to spend time together, learn and share

## **Earthcare Committee Sunday, December 1, Rise of Meeting**

All are welcome to join us on first Sundays.

## **Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business Sunday, December 8, Rise of Meeting**

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

## **ARCH social Saturday, December 14, 1-3p**

ARCH invites elders to a holiday social at the Third Street Meetinghouse. Light refreshments will be served and there will be a "re-gifting gift exchange." Bring something you already have at home (not a new gift) you think someone else would enjoy and appreciate, and take home something new-to-you!

## **Christmas Holiday Dinner Sunday, December 15, 1-4p**

Join Friends for a dish-to-pass, casual Christmas dinner with fellowship at the Third Street Meetinghouse. Please bring something to share, perhaps something more substantial than our regular monthly lunch..

## **QuakerSpeak! discussion Sunday, December 15, 9:30a**

Gather in the library to watch a QuakerSpeak video and discuss.

## **Peace and Social Justice Committee Sunday, December 15, Rise of Meeting**

All are welcome to join us on third Sundays.

## **Friendly Women Third... Friday! Friday, December 20, 6:30p**

Exploring a new calendar option: how about third Friday of each month? Also exploring the location, so watch the listserv or contact Kris at [kris.altucher@gmail.com](mailto:kris.altucher@gmail.com).

## **Christmas Eve Meeting for Worship Tuesday, December 24, 7p**

Gather in worship with Friends at the Third Street Meetinghouse.

## **Last Sunday Dish-to-Pass Brunch Sunday, December 29, Rise of Meeting**

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

## **Newsletter submission due Thursday, January 2, 5p**

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

### **On Sundays**

10:30a **Children gather** upstairs at the Third Street Meetinghouse

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

### **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.