



Newsletter of the

Ithaca Monthly Meeting

of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

October 2019

IMM CONTACTS

ithacamonthlymeeting.org

Meetinghouse:

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607-229-9500

To reserve space, email:
ithacamonthlymeeting@gmail.com

Clerk:

John Lewis • 607-227-6273
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Assistant Clerk:

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

Treasurer:

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Ministry & Worship:

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607-351-0057 • nschneid@aol.com

Childcare Requests:

Ellie Rosenberg • 277-1403
ellierosenberg7@gmail.com

Friends Center for Racial Justice at the Burrtt 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.

Friends Feed My Starving Children



Several Friends from Ithaca Monthly Meeting volunteered at the Save My Starving Children Mobile Pack at St. Catherine of Siena Church. They packed thousands of nutritious meals in just two hours. And, they were delighted to sport hairnets.

Cleanliness, Godliness, and the Meetinghouse

Are you willing and able to volunteer an hour or two in the Meetinghouse once a month, or less frequently, taking care of basic cleaning tasks? While we have a paid cleaner (Friend Carl) who does a detailed cleaning on the first and third weeks of the month, we have a need for more Sweepers to help out the other weeks. You can commit to sweeping once a month or less frequently, as your schedule allows. Everyone who contributes their time as they can is a big help to making our Meetinghouse look presentable and be a pleasant space in which to worship. The tasks are not difficult and a checklist is posted on the inside of the closet door off the kitchen. Some F/friends sweep together and use the time for socializing and fellowship. This is also a job that adults and children can do together.

If you're ready to sign up for a sweeping shift, visit our online sign-up form: <http://signup.com/go/gisFGAY>

If you'd like more information, please contact Melissa Travis Dunham, at mtravis823@yahoo.com or 607-277-9599.

— *Melissa Travis Dunham*

Talking about death won't kill you..

... it can help you make informed decisions about end-of-life plans for yourself and others.

Many people die in ways inconsistent with their values and wishes. Planning ahead provides an opportunity to think about and communicate what you do and don't want at the end of life.

Join us—Saturday, November 9, 2-4pm, The Space@Greenstar, 700 W. Buffalo Street, Ithaca (enter on Court St. at N. Fulton)—to develop the practical know-how needed to plan well for the end of life. The format is open, so drop by for a few minutes or stay for two hours. Staff from local organizations can help you explore:

- advance directives: health care proxies & living wills
- accessing palliative care
- hospice care
- wills & trusts
- organ donation
- funeral planning
- green burial

Brought to you by On Dying Well, Cayuga Medical Center, Finger Lakes Donor Recovery Network, Funeral Consumers Alliance of the Finger Lakes, Greensprings Natural Cemetery Preserve, Hospicare & Palliative Care Services, Human Services Coalition, Ithaca College Gerontology Institute, Visiting Nurse Service of Ithaca

For more information, contact Angela Mennitto (607) 272-0236, amennitto@gmail.com.

— Bronwyn Mohlke

Sing with the Nightingales, October 11-13

The Nightingales is a group of Friends who get together to sing. You do not have to be a great—or even a *good*—singer to participate. If you can talk, you can sing. We gather not to perform, but to share the joy of fellowship and the love of singing.

Good news! We will be gathering in Ithaca from October 11-13.

Here is the link to register online: <https://tinyurl.com/y3junedv>

If you have any questions, or problems with registering, contact Bronwyn (see below).

You don't have to come for the whole weekend to participate. There will be opportunities to sing Friday evening, Saturday morning, Saturday late afternoon, and Saturday after dinner. Those that stay overnight Saturday will warm up the Ithaca Meetinghouse with song before worship on Sunday.

Come and be nourished, restored and transformed through the gift of communal singing.

If you have *Rise Up Singing*, *Rise Again*, and/or songsheets/lyrics of songs to share, bring them along!

Consider hosting a Nightingale!

Friends will be traveling to Ithaca to join us, and some would like to stay with Friends! Do you have room for one or more friendly Friends to stay with you that weekend? If so, please let Bronwyn know.

— Melissa Blake (607) 379-4297 / melissablake2010@gmail.com,
Melody Johnson (607) 272-8755 / rcrepea1@twcny.rr.com,
Bronwyn Mohlke (607) 220-3219 / BJQMohlke@gmail.com

Fall Sessions at Powell House, November 1-3

Join Northeastern Regional Meeting for Fall Sessions Friday-Sunday, November 1-3 at Powell House in beautiful Old Chatham, NY. When Friends from all worship groups and meetings participate in our sessions, we bring the wisdom of a variety of Friends to our work together and ensure that the decisions we make will be reported back to each meeting represented. Please join us!

Registration is now open online at <https://nyym.org/session/fall-sessions-2019>—and there will be many carpooling options from the Ithaca area!

Friends Center for Racial Justice (FCRJ)

Community Class Reunion

On August 17 nine Friends gathered at the Friends Center for Racial Justice for a Community Class Reunion. After a meal and a check-in, we watched a portion of a video from New England Yearly Meeting. It is a “Virtual Plenary” put on line as of January 2019. There are words to follow on the screen, as well as a verbal presentation of those words. This plenary is facilitated by Lisa Graustein, a member of Beacon Hill, Massachusetts Friends Meeting. Following is an excerpt from the introduction to the videos:

“In preparation for this summer, Lisa is inviting New England Friends—whether we plan to attend Annual Sessions or not—into an experiment with a ‘virtual plenary.’ These videos will explore some of the minutes we have approved in past years, how they are moving among us, and spiritual practices we can try out as part of our shared work living into the minutes. She welcomes Friends with wisdom, insight, and practices to offer to join her...”

The videos have four topic areas:

- The Doctrine of Discovery
- Challenging White Supremacy
- Climate Change
- The Poor People’s Campaign

In our reunion gathering, we focused on the second of the three videos on *Challenging White Supremacy: Patterns*. The three videos in this section are not long. The first two are about 25 minutes in length, the third is about 9 minutes. Before the discussion, there were comments about what a great and logical idea it is to look back at past minutes and see how Friends are living out what we had intended. The discussion that Community Class alums had that day was both deep and wide ranging. So it seemed a good idea to share this resource with Ithaca Friends. And of course, there are three other topic areas that can be looked at. This resource can be found on-line by typing in “nerym virtual plenary 2019”. (I get frustrated when trying to find it in other ways.) If Friends go to this website and want to talk about it, please contact me, I would really enjoy hearing what you think – neschneid@aol.com or 273-3566.

FCRJ Annual Meeting, October 4-5

FCRJ will hold its Annual Meeting Oct 4-6. It is a time for the FCRJ community to gather and look at the first three years of FCRJ and look forward to the coming year. Friends are welcome to come by for fellowship and/or for the deeper discussions. Please see listserv for the agenda highlights.

White Privilege Symposium in Rochester Cancelled

FYI, the White Privilege Symposium scheduled for November 15-16 in Rochester has been cancelled. Please see the Farmington Scipio listserv or our Meeting listserv for further information.

FCRJ Teams

Elizabeth Schneider is organizing the support teams for FCRJ. There is a tentatively scheduled meeting for November 3 at the rise of Meeting to organize the teams for January through June, 2020. (The meeting is tentative until the room reservation is confirmed.) It is during those months that FCRJ holds weekend workshops for persons coming from near and far. The Teams are: Accommodations, Hospitality/Greeter, Transportation, Set Up/Clean Up, Meals, Cleaning, Technology Support. You can learn more about the various teams and see if one is right for you. The amount of time given is totally up to each volunteer. If you have any questions beforehand, contact me at: neschneid@aol.com or 273-3566. Hope to see you there!

— Elizabeth Schneider

From the Archives: A Look at IMM and Sanctuary

Sanctuary, Part II (continued from Sept.)– Questions

In July 1984, Ithaca Monthly Meeting had declared its readiness to participate in the Sanctuary movement. It would be months before the arrival of Meeting's first guest, and in the meantime Meeting wrestled with some concerns. The approval had come with one member standing aside, and there are rumblings in later minutes of concerns:

"In anticipating the report of the ad hoc committee on Sanctuary, the Clerk [Frank Pineo] suggested that this is a misnomer. Our concern is to aid refugees. There is no legal 'Sanctuary' status, and the term might be seen as confrontational. Chuck Mohler reminded us that the term is traditional in religious groups." (September 1984)

'A member reminded us that 'Sanctuary' is not a category that has any legal standing. There have been recent indictments of several people harboring refugees in Sanctuary, and arrests of such refugees. The concern was expressed that the Meeting might have proceeded without being fully aware that there is no protection under the law for this activity, and also without being in unity.

The committee distributed a brief account of the January 14, 1985 Immigration and Naturalization Service initiatives to prosecute those involved in Sanctuary. There was discussion of whether the Meeting should send money to the National Sanctuary Legal Defense Fund. The Meeting approved an initial \$200, from surplus funds, and individuals are urged to send to the Meeting's Sanctuary fund restricted contributions for legal defense. Also, the address of the national legal defense fund will be published in the newsletter so that individuals may contribute directly." (January 1985)

As part of that conversation, Ned Burtt, in whose home the refugees would live, wrote a reply to the concerns:

"I am moved to try to clarify the issues involved in 'Sanctuary.'

It has become evident that when our Meeting decided, last April, to participate in the Sanctuary Movement many members had, unfortunately, not faced clearly all that was involved in that decision. It should be faced, for the consequences can be serious. Under our present government there is the risk of fines and imprisonment.

All our members are concerned that the unity of spirit in the Ithaca Meeting be fully maintained. But this may not require complete agreement on every important decision. One member of the Meeting has asked to be recorded as feeling unable to participate in the Sanctuary Movement.

Some basic facts must be considered with special care. One is that the fundamental reason for the April decision was our loving concern for the fate of the Central American refugees who are being arrested and sent back into the hands of their prosecutors. We could not in all conscience cooperate with this inhuman policy on the part of the present Administration. The issue was similar to the issue faced by our forefathers a century and a quarter ago when the

law required that runaway slaves be arrested and returned to their Southern owners. The natural way to express our refusal to cooperate was to join the Sanctuary Movement. It was realized that the word "sanctuary" gives no legal protection to the refugees or to those aiding them.

Another basic fact is that our refusal does not lack legal support. In 1980 the United Nations adopted an accord which pledges all signatories to offer asylum to persons who are fleeing persecution. The United States became one of the signatories. I believe our signature makes the pledge it expresses a law of the United States, to be respected and enforced as such. In offering sanctuary to refugees we are obeying that law.

What will happen when the conduct of the Immigration and Naturalization Service is tested in the courts against that law has not yet been decided." (Ned Burtt, January 24, 1985.)

The 1984 State of the Meeting Report, written in February 1985, still reported that:

"There are two particular issues of spiritual and social concern which have seemed difficult for the meeting to meet prayerfully and with clarity.

1. How can our meeting respond affirmatively if a same-sex couple requests a ceremony of commitment under the care of the meeting?
2. How can our meeting resolve and structure our commitment to share in and support the Sanctuary movement?

There continues to be a very real love for each other and a tender sensitivity although at present there is not yet consensus regarding the meeting's response to these issues."

In March 1985, Meeting approved this minute:

The Ithaca Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends is moved to receive into Sanctuary the woman called Esperanza.

Later minutes focus more on the immediate needs of refugees and less on questions about Meeting's proper involvement.

I'll be writing more about the refugees who came and the Meeting's support for them. While the minutes have a fair amount of information, I would also love to speak with people who participated in IMM's Sanctuary work and include their stories in this telling. Please contact me at simonstl@simonstl.com, or 607 227 0858, if you have anything to add to these stories.

— Simon St. Laurent, Meeting Historian

Ithaca Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends Monthly Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business, September 8, 2019

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.)

2019.9.1 Opening Worship. Ithaca Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends met in Monthly Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business on September 8, 2019. At 12:20 pm, twenty-six Friends gathered and settled into worship.

“May words of the Spirit be spoken, and words of the Spirit be heard.”

Clerk recognized Nancy Riffer who was holding the Meeting in the Light and read from Sylvia Messner (Friends Journal, 1980):

Sometimes in our fear of lack we forget our plenty, or in our believing that only one other person or thing is our only source of what we believe we need, we may become dependent upon that particular person or thing and lose sight of the real Source. In fearing our needs will not be met, we often block out the real Source of all we have, all that is given us, all that is available for us, preventing it from reaching us through any ready channel or source which may express or reflect or provide that which we need. Thus, in our fear and blindness, we block that Source from working through and in us.

2019.9.1 Burt House – Extending the MOU with FCRJ

Karen Friedeborn from the Burt House Committee reminded us that in October 2016, Ithaca Monthly Meeting (IMM) approved making the Burt House available to the Friends Center for Racial Justice (FCRJ) for a period of three years.

Between February and August of this year, IMM has held several threshing sessions exploring different aspects of its relationship with FCRJ as preparation for considering an extension of the MOU. In July, IMM agreed to extend the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between IMM and FCRJ to December 31, 2020 while threshing continued. At the final threshing session in August, those present concluded that the Meeting was ready to consider an extension of the agreement for another three-year period.

The Burt House Committee therefore proposes that the current MOU between IMM and FCRJ be extended to December 31, 2022. This extension date covers a period of three years from the original ending date and adds two months, putting the agreement on a calendar-year basis that helps facilitate FCRJ planning and also corresponds with the IMM fiscal year. It is expected that discussions about how IMM and FCRJ can work together on racial justice concerns will continue. The current MOU can be modified if needed upon the approval of both IMM and FCRJ.

Friends asked questions about finances related to maintaining and sustaining the Burt House. While some uncertainties on this issue

remain, Friends felt that the unknowns are not substantial enough to constitute a barrier to our decision-making.

Friends approved the extension of the MOU through 2022. @

2019.9.2 Third Street Meetinghouse Committee - Report

Melissa Travis Dunham from the Third Street Meetinghouse Committee (TSMC) read a prepared report that described the committee's struggle to establish policies for meetinghouse use that embody IMM's desire to "knit ourselves into the community" while at the same time safeguarding the building and ensuring its usage is in line with Friends' testimonies and intentions. Melissa shared that the committee regularly wrestles with questions such as:

- the "Quakerliness" of a particular event;
- concerns over the use of the Meetinghouse to generate monetary profit;
- the significance of the requesters relationship to IMM

The TSMC is clear that they need to let go of this discernment. The TSMC resolved at their own meeting on May 17, 2019:

TSMC is clear that we do not want to be gatekeepers regarding space requests. We recognize that there are too many individual circumstances to codify. If the Meetinghouse is available, it should be used. In cases where the entire building is being reserved or when groups will be using the space on an ongoing basis, the scheduler may work with TSMC for discernment.

The TSMC will strive to say "yes" whenever the opportunity to do so is presented and invites F/friends to share if and how the relinquishment of these reins is impactful.

Friends considered the implications of allowing use of the building indiscriminately. Members of the committee emphasized that they have not been faced with requests from starkly "un-Quaker-ly" organizations or events, but there are a multitude of other requests that seem quite benign if not actively or profoundly "Quakerly". The committee has found that discernment over these requests represents a large use of time and energy, and it is too much for a committee that is charged with the significant task of providing care of the physical plant of the Meetinghouse. After seasoning this issue over several years, the TSMC found clarity on the minute that they passed in May. In a sense, it is a reflection of our Quaker values to be open to those who are different from us.

Friends considered the idea that there be further threshing within Ithaca Monthly Meeting or perhaps that a different committee might be tasked with considering how best to ensure that our meetinghouse remains a welcoming edifice that stands as a testimony to our values.

With appreciation for the depth of the feeling expressed, the Clerk will bring this issue in Ministry and Worship. Friends received the report. @

Minutes, continued on page 6

2019.9.3 Treasurer's Report

Mike Simkin, Treasure, reported that it has been difficult to accomplish reporting in a timely manner with our current bookkeeper. Friends noted that the relationship with the bookkeeper has become unhelpful to our Treasurer, and that this is on the agenda for the Finance Committee. Friends received the Treasure's report.

2019.9.4 Other Concerns

A Friend suggested that a group might be convened to craft a building-use policy statement with representation from the people who spoke with passion on the issue today.

A Friend raised the idea that we might hire a part-time business manager to reduce the magnitude of the Clerk's job. @

Twenty-two Friends settled into silent worship at 1:45 before adjourning. Our next regular Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business will be held at the rise of Meeting on October 13, 2019.

Respectfully submitted,

Marin Clarkberg

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 4:30p

Join us upstairs every Sunday from 4:30-5:30 for community yoga, open to everyone. This class is adaptable to all levels of fitness. Bring a mat if you have one and wear loose clothes. Pay as you are lead. It's fun! Questions? Contact Kris Altucher or Dreia Spies.

October 2019 Calendar of Ithaca Monthly Meeting

QuakerSpeak! discussion Sunday, October 6, 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, October 6, Rise of Meeting

All are welcome to join us on first Sundays.

Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business Sunday, October 13, Rise of Meeting

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

Friendly Women Third Thursday Thursday, October 17, 6:30p

Upstairs at Wegmans cafe, now on the third Thursday of each month, this is an informal social gathering open to all. Come hang out, have a bite to eat, and maybe do some shopping. Questions? Contact Kris at kris.altucher@gmail.com.

QuakerSpeak! discussion Sunday, October 20, 9:30a

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

Peace and Social Justice Committee Sunday, October 20, Rise of Meeting

All are welcome to join us on third Sundays.

Last Sunday Dish-to-Pass Brunch Sunday, October 27, Rise of Meeting

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

Newsletter submission due Thursday, October 31, 5p

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

On Sundays

- 10:00a **Meeting for Worship** at Hector Meetinghouse
- 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.