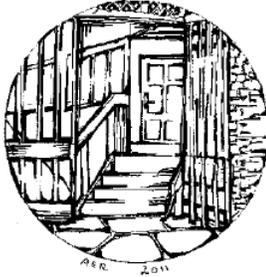


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Newsletter of the

Ithaca Monthly Meeting

of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

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Welcome to an electronic newsletter

Friends, the Communications Committee is experimenting with electronic newsletter software. When this hits your mailbox, it will be a first-time experiment. Bear with us as we try new things. Feel free to share any feedback you have about your experience with the newsletter with Marin Clarkberg, clarkberg@cornell.edu.

Upcoming events

Women's chair yoga is on Zoom, Monday & Thurs at 11 AM until further notice.

Anyone who'd like to start this gentle yoga class can email Nancy Gabriel, ntg2@cornell.edu, and she will give them the Zoom info. It is welcoming and grounding and refreshing.

Check-in buddies.

During these interesting times it is easy to feel a little unconnected, without face to face contact, and hanging out mostly at home. Ministry & Worship is planning on putting together a buddy system for checking in with each other for the Meeting community, starting later this week. Let me know if you're interested in being a part of this. We don't envision anything complicated, and you and your buddy can check in by phone, text, or whatever suits you best. - Kris, kris.altucher@gmail.com

ARCH Discussion via Zoom, date and time to be announced.

Quaker Values and End of Life Decision Making during the Corona Virus Pandemic. Ithaca Monthly Meeting's ARCH (Aging Resources, Consultation, and Help) volunteers have received a request to continue the discussion we started earlier this winter regarding Quaker values and the end of life decision making. Questions are arising, such as how does the corona virus pandemic affect my thinking about these issues? Have I discussed my thoughts about corona virus with my health care proxy? What if I become seriously ill, but don't want to go on a ventilator? How do make these wishes known to health care providers? These are difficult but important questions. Join ARCH volunteer Barbara Chase for a discussion of these issues via Zoom. There will be a brief review of paperwork such as health care proxies and Medical Orders for Life Sustaining Treatment (MOLST) forms, /DNR orders if people want, but primarily it will be a time for us to tenderly share our thoughts, feelings and concerns with each other. - Barbara Chase

Check out ithacamonthlymeeting.org

Friends, the Communications Committee has been working to make the Meeting's website as useful as possible in connecting Friends to the activities of the meeting. You can find information on how to connect to Meeting for Worship by Zoom, including [technical how-to](#) and some [best practices for online worship](#). Any feedback is welcome. Members of the Communications Committee are Marin Clarkberg, Melissa Travis Dunham, and Nancy Riffer.

How do you center?

How do you center? What have you found helpful in this current environment of online Worship experiences?

I frequently have a difficult time centering during worship. During our remote Meeting for Worship I found myself easily settling into a quiet and centered place without doing anything but sitting down and relaxing. I wasn't even glancing at my watch or watching the computer screen. (My computer suddenly shut itself down in the last few minutes of worship because I hadn't noticed the 3% warning sign. 😊)

- Nancy Riffer

I think about how Impossible it is to worship online and how amazing it is that it works. I feel love and gratitude for all the connections I have with Ithaca Friends. Then I clear my mind and let it happen. Thanks be to the Spirit that resides within us all.

- John Lewis

I center myself differently depending on whether I am trying to listen to the voice within, focus on someone else, go outside of myself, or just relax - but all start with deeper breathing and a certain habitual recognition of an interior space that allows reconnection and reorientation to the sacred.

- Betsy Keokosky

I use my breath with eyes open and cast down. Other times a fixed gaze through a window to the outside world helps me center.

- Carolyn Kenyon

I greet my Other and say, "Thank you for this time to sit with you." And I sit and close my eyes and breath and make space for my Other to join me, sit with me and connect me with the space inside of me that I am usually too busy to feel. And when I am in that space, I then become aware of the light that I feel around me and that is connecting us all. And I invite in that light and sit with it.

- Kelly Moreland

I use the things I say at the beginning of a yoga class: feel where you're touching the earth, or your chair. Become aware of your breathing. Feel the presence of everyone around you, and feel how you are connected.

- Kris Altucher

I would say take a few deep slow breath's focusing on the rising and the falling of your abdomen or chest as you're breathing. And just notice who is present at the meeting and maybe take a moment to hold every One in the light. And then just wait in relaxed expectation.

- Lynn Podhaski

"Dwell in silence this day. Slowly, with grace, silences will fill you up."

- Helen Schantz

Give thanks. Feel the floor beneath my feet. Sense my breath flowing in and out of my nostrils. Feel the floor beneath my feet. Trace the wood grain in the floorboards and contemplate all the people who constructed that floor, all the trees involved, all the days of sunshine, rain, snow, and wind, all the life involved. Give thanks.

- Amala Lane

I have found it helpful to make meditation practice a strict routine every morning. (I had been doing this for the past few years- but not as consistently as now) I have an app called "Insight" that is free and easy to use. Since we are essentially homebound at this point this routine helps me start everyday with clarity and sense of purpose. I also do some spiritual reading that is uplifting after the mediation. I am practicing looking for gifts throughout the day that seem brought to me through a deeper awareness of asking for assistance in this time of challenge.

- Erica Weiss

Earthcare and the Climate Crisis

On February 23rd after brunch, Earthcare presented three queries to a group of Friends gathered in worship sharing focused on the climate crisis. These three Queries (actually four since there was a 2a and 2b) and people's responses were transcribed to four flip chart pads. ([Click to see](#))

We led into the worship with singing and a short video of the iconic Voyager photograph of Earth as a pale blue dot, or, as Carl Sagan described it, "a small stage in a vast cosmic arena." He wrote that, "from that distant vantage point Earth might not be of particular interest," but, "Look again at that dot. That's here. That's home. That's us. On it, everyone you love, everyone you know, everyone you ever heard of, every human being who ever was, lived out their lives."

Given this cosmic perspective, **the first query** led us into speaking of what we love most of this planet we call home, and people's responses ranged from giraffes to the sun, the niches you can get lost in, and the local things you love most that frame your world.

The second query (2a) led us into a discussion of the importance of national

legislation, such as Carbon Pricing and the Green New Deal, currently in committee, as ways to decrease the destabilizing greenhouse gas emissions that are threaten our atmosphere. To this we added the crucial underpinning of non-partisan dialog to find common ground and to achieve long-lasting support and buy-in of such legislation. We also discussed Project Drawdown and how things like educating women (to decrease the population), and rethinking food (from reducing waste to changing the way we eat and grow it) rank as high as alternative energies as methods to decrease carbon in the atmosphere.

It was noted in 2a that carbon pricing shifts the social, environmental, and health costs of carbon pollution from the public, who now pays, to the fossil fuel producers, who now reap the profits. This uses the “market” to start a profound ripple effect through the entire economy. Also, that the Green New Deal (GND) looks at the bigger picture of related decarbonization, jobs, and justice. It is an umbrella concept to inspire legislation.

Part B of the second query (chart 3) asked what the meeting would like to further explore? People responded with questions like how will GND be paid for? How can we help move the political process forward? What is a reliable source to track these bills? (the FCNL website offers excellent explanations.) How can we reverse the interests of corporations profiting from fossil fuels and their power to block change? How do we make externalities internal to business practice? Everything is connected.

Our third and final query was what do we, as a community of Quakers, have to offer? Past listening projects were mentioned. Understanding people have different reasons, equally valid, to bring them to certain conclusions. Encouraging bipartisan dialogue. Whom can we speak with, whom can we learn from? How issues are presented matters. How we communicate matters. Finding areas of commonality matters.

Several weeks later, after this presentation, three of us took the message to Representative Tom Reed's office in Corning and spoke with one of his chief aides, Alison Hunt. We found out that Reed is now convinced that climate change is real and is exploring one of these carbon pricing bills in the House – the fee and dividend. Reed is on the important Ways and Means committee in congress that introduces these bills, and also co-chairs the Problem Solvers Caucus, which is a bipartisan group. We left him with literature from FCNL's website.

[Minutes from March Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business \(Click to read\)](#)

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**Contributions for the newsletter are welcome. Send to clarkberg@cornell.edu.
The Clerk of Ithaca Monthly Meeting, Gina Varrichio, can be reached at clerk@ithacamonthlymeeting.org.**
