



Newsletter of the

Ithaca Monthly Meeting

of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

March 2020

IMM CONTACTS

ithacamonthlymeeting.org

Meetinghouse:

120 Third Street • Ithaca NY 14850

607-229-9500

To reserve space, email:

ithacamonthlymeeting@gmail.com

Clerk:

Gina Varrichio • 607-272-2512

clerk@ithacamonthlymeeting.org

Treasurer:

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Ministry & Worship:

Nancy Riffer • 607-379-6372

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Childcare Requests:

Ellie Rosenberg • 277-1403

ellierosenberg7@gmail.com

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:

m1r17@cornell.edu

Newsletter

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

On Committees

There have been a number of things bubbling up for Friends over the course of the last several months. I've noted some recurrent themes. One of these themes is the role of committees: why do we have them; when should we use them; and what do we do with the information we garner from them? My hope is that, by taking time to labor with one of these threads, we might find a way into some of the other important conversations we need to be having as a community.

In January, I attended the Friends Decision-Making and Clerking workshop at Powell House, the New York Yearly Meeting retreat center. I am drawn to share portions of two pieces by Arthur M. Larrabee, one of the facilitators, regarding the role of committees. In hopes that this might serve as a framework for reflection, I have added a few queries of my own to the end. If time allows, we will include some worship sharing around these articles and the accompanying queries at the March Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business. If you have particular thoughts to share prior to that time, please feel free to contact me at clerk@ithacamonthlymeeting.org.

— Gina Varrichio, Clerk

Excerpted from: The Use of Committees

by Arthur M. Larrabee

Committees play an important role in Friends decision-making process. There are things that cannot be done easily or well in a meeting of 20 to 40 people or larger, but which can be done quite well in a smaller group. When a group too large tries to do the work that belongs to a smaller group, it is an invitation for frustration and upset.

The work of committees will vary depending on the responsibilities they have been given. A committee does its work in support of the larger group which has appointed it. One general aspect of committee work is to “thresh” a matter; that is, to separate the wheat from the chaff. A committee does the work of gathering data, examining assumptions, considering all points of view, exploring alternatives, weighing consequences, “seasoning” ideas over time, and then formulating recommendations that are well grounded and carefully considered.

A committee does not need to be large in numbers to do its work well. It is often the case that a committee of three to six people can very well satisfy the need for good committee work. Of course, the size of the committee will be a function of its task and the expectations of the group which appoints it.

In relation to committees, the work of the whole group is to “test” the conclusions and recommendations of the committee, not to redo the work. The whole group provides a second venue for an idea to be examined, but with more detachment and a perspective perhaps unavailable to those who have been immersed in the work. If a committee's work is unacceptable, the solution is to send it back to committee, not to function as a committee of the whole.

On Committees, continued on page 2

Excerpted from: Aspects of the Work of Committees

by Arthur M. Larrabee

Committee responsibility

Sometimes when committees have trouble with a particular matter, they “give up,” concluding in frustration, “let’s refer this to the meeting and see what they want to do.” When this happens the meeting is not well served. It is more helpful when the committee labors under the discipline of coming to a conclusion, recommendation or minute. A committee’s report where express where the committee has been, what it has considered, and what it recommends. Of course, if a recommendation cannot be made, this, too, must be reported to the meeting.

The recommendation of a committee carries weight

There should be a presumption in favor of the work and recommendations of a committee. A committee’s work and conclusions should carry weight. When this doesn’t happen, is it because the report was poorly presented? Or, perhaps the work of the committee is not trustworthy.

Queries for Ithaca Monthly Meeting:

In what ways does our committee structure support deep discernment and faithfulness?

When does this structure distract from the greater calling of Friends to cultivate community?

How can we encourage the spirit of worship be carried into our committee meetings?

What would make the work of a committee “not trustworthy,” and how can we guard against it?

Friends Center for Racial Justice (FCRJ) Events

Friends, big news! You can now register for workshops on-line at our website: FCRJ.org. Fliers with more information are available in the Meetinghouse and from Angela Hopkins.

All events are held at the FCRJ at 227 N. Willard Way in Ithaca.

March 13 through 15. “Intersection of Race and Gender.” This weekend is an opportunity to come together to share stories and consider local and global movements involving women.

March 27 through 29. “Anti-Racism Analysis Training.” (This training is already full.)

April 17 through 19. “Racial Justice and Eco-Justice: Solutions for an Earth Restored.”

May 1 through 3. “Radical Faithfulness, Spiritual Grounding to Interrupt Racism.” Join us for a time of discernment about our inherited narratives.

May 29 through 31. “A Case for Reparations.” John Woolman articulated a case for reparations for slavery.

June 5 through 7. Racism and the Differently-Abled: Intertwined Hurdles for People of Color.

Contact information for the FCRJ is on page 1, left column.

Consider Powell House: We Subscribe!

Ithaca Monthly Meeting has an annual subscription to Powell House, New York Yearly Meeting’s study and contemplation center near Albany, which means that we can send a member to each of the workshops *all year long*.

Here are the March workshops for adults:

March 6-8 Experimenting with JOY

March 13-15 Pie for Parents

March 20-22 Opening to the Heart of Worship

March 27-29 Creating in the Light: Creativity & Spirituality

If you are interested in any of these workshops, or want to check out the workshops for April, May, June or July, use this link: <https://poho.org/>. Let anyone from Ministry & Worship know your interests and we’ll help you get registered under the Meeting’s subscription!

New York Yearly Meeting Spring Sessions 2020

We welcome you to the 2020 NYYM Spring Sessions April 3-5! Once again, Oakwood Friends School is opening their doors to us so that we may gather and discern the business of New York Yearly Meeting. All the sessions and committee meetings will be held on this beautiful campus at 22 Spackenkill Road, Poughkeepsie, NY.

Spring Sessions will be co-hosted by Sessions Committee, Nine Partners Regional Meeting, and Purchase Quarterly Meeting

Please register by March 25th — and join us!

<https://www.nyyym.org/session/spring-sessions-2020>

Help with Memorial Minutes

There are currently four memorial minutes for Ithaca Friends who have passed away in recent years that are in the process of being drafted. These are for Carol Kimball, Will White, Ann Rhodin, and Marion Dagrossa. Those wishing to make suggestions for things to include in any of these minutes should contact the clerk at clerk@ithacamonthlymeeting.org.

— Gina Varrichio, Clerk

We are Making Comfort Quilts

We are working on designing and creating quilts to lend out to Friends who are going through health or other issues, as a way to let them know we are thinking of them. There are a couple of ways you can get involved:

- You can join the fun planning, cutting, and sewing! Let Kris or Bronwyn know if you’re interested.
- You can donate clean, preshrunk 100% cotton fabric for the quilts. Bring fabric to Meeting.

— Kris Altucher

The Quaker Settlement in Aotearoa/New Zealand

Members of the Society of Friends worldwide are called to seek a way of living that affirms the wholeness and sacredness of life, the Spirit, and the universe. In New Zealand, or Aotearoa (the indigenous Maori's name for the Pacific islands, meaning "Land of the Long White Cloud"), Friends created the intentional community called the Quaker Settlement in the small city of Whanganui. Beginning in 1976, they re-purposed the land of a former Friends school to build a residential community and educational center.

It was 20 acres of bare paddock that now, 45 years later, has evolved into orchards and vegetable gardens, a food forest, and regenerating native trees. At the center are townhouses for about 20 families, garages and sheds, conference and communal facilities, accommodation for guests, a swimming pool, and a specially designed octagonal Quiet Room. Community members who wish to, come together six mornings a week for a half-hour of worship, and join the Whanganui Friends Meeting on Sunday mornings and for other events and activities.

I spent a week in January living and working as a WOOFer at "Quaker Acres" as it is affectionately called. WOOFing (Workers on Organic Farms) is a decades-old scheme (and international network) of individuals who trade 4 hours of daily labor for accommodation on family farms and orchards, and in market gardens. It is very popular in Aotearoa and is what originally took me there in 1997. My plans to be a WOOFer for a year or two to explore this amazing little country soon morphed into nearly a decade of living there, marrying a New Zealander, and working for the Education Review Office... but that's another story for another time, or maybe a book.

Since I made plans to travel to NZ for a month in order to visit some beloved friends, family, and places, and it was the Southern Hemisphere summer, I thought I would check out this intentional community that I heard about for the first time at Ramallah Friends Meeting in occupied Palestine in 2017, from one of its residents. Peter is a longtime resident at Quaker Settlement and told me that they welcome visitors of all sorts. He didn't tell me

that they hosted WOOFers, but then I didn't tell him I had been a WOOFer 20 years ago in Aotearoa. When I saw on their website that they have such opportunities and need help with land care of all kinds, I inquired and was encouraged to come for a week.

When I arrived by bus to Whanganui, I was most thoroughly welcomed by my official hosts Widge and Orlanda. They are a couple who are relatively new residents of Quaker Settlement and helped to integrate me into the community for my short stay. This meant taking me to the grocery store first thing and helping me settle into my flat that I would share with a young British Friend who was also WOOFing. Orlanda proved to be a skilled work supervisor, explaining and sharing the work I did with native seedlings and gardening. Widge plays the button box accordion and brought his "squeezebox" out to serenade us with work songs as we did weed release of the little trees on grassy slopes. Both of them infused our tasks and all of my time at the Settlement with the joys of connecting to the land and to the community. I met a number of the residents at daily meeting and at several morning teas. My fellow WOOFer and I were invited to lunch or dinner, and we met up with people as we worked in the mornings and recreated in the afternoon and evenings. In addition to working each morning, our hosts invited us along to activities in Whanganui: a choral concert, the local Green Drinks night (check out the international network at greendrinks.org), and touring a local natural earth house under construction.

The Quaker Settlement has incorporated a permaculture (permanent agriculture and people culture) design and aims to combine its Quaker values with those of environmental sustainability and earth care. Since the culture and political society of Aotearoa/New Zealand embodies many of our Quaker values around peace, social justice, equality, and simplicity, the Settlement has a secure berth in its location on earth, in that nation. The community embraces international visitors and welcomes Friends to learn and grow with them. You won't find a better place for WOOFing! (See: Quakersettlement.co.nz)

—Julia Ganson



Game Night: Friends had fun on February 28th.



In IMM History: Sanctuary

Part IV, Juan

After Esperanza left IMM sanctuary in October 1986, the Sanctuary Committees of both IMM and the greater Ithaca area re-grouped, and brought a new asylum-seeker, Juan, into sanctuary in June 1987. This report from the Sanctuary Committee reflects on shifts in their approach and the ongoing challenges of supporting refugees.

Sanctuary, 1987

Submitted by Ron Ozer, as subcommittee report for Peace and Social Action, 1/10/88.

With the departure of “Esperanza” and Mayra, the Salvadoran mother and child who were in sanctuary in Ithaca for a year and a half, a new phase began for the Friend’s Sanctuary Committee. Her decision to leave was prompted by a need for contact with an hispanic community and relatives in this country. Contact with Esperanza continues through the many friends she made in Ithaca. The sanctuary committee is no longer involved in her support.

Previous to Esperanza’s departure there were 2 committees for Sanctuary: a nurture committee incorporating the Sanctuary Committee of Ithaca Monthly Meeting and an outreach committee also known as the Ithaca Area Sanctuary Committee (IASC). During our evaluation of the time with Esperanza it was decided to merge the 2 committees so that all decisions could be made by one community-wide group. This new committee includes the Friends (though there is now a lesser percentage of Ithaca Friends than before); its funds are located in both the Sanctuary account of Ithaca Meeting and in a separate IASC account. IASC has authority over all of these funds. At present contributions from

supporting groups (including the sanctuary plate at Ithaca Meeting) are about equal to expenses.

The evaluation brought out characteristics we found preferable for any new refugee we might invite into sanctuary in Ithaca. The committee decided that it was desirable to have a refugee committed to public speaking (to increase awareness about the violence in Central America), willing to share a house (Ned Burt has kindly insisted on his house being used as a Sanctuary), and having a full understanding of what sanctuary means. A search was initiated with various members of the committee contacting groups nationwide that are involved with refugees from Central America. The search process continued from January (when the committee decided to seek a refugee) until June (when Juan arrived). Juan was found through a contact in Philadelphia who had met him in Los Angeles. He had already been arrested by the INS and was thus “legal” and awaiting a deportation hearing. His situation was dire - he had fled El Salvador without his wife and children after continued harassment including torture and detainment. The committee has brought Juan to Ithaca and feels responsible for providing food, lodging, and care (including English Lessons and help for his family in El Salvador).

The New Jewish Agenda has declared sanctuary and is a cosponsor for Juan. Other supporting groups that attend our meetings include the First Baptist Church, Living Hope Fellowship, Poplar Ridge Friends Meeting, and members of the Ithaca community. The role of chairperson is currently being rotated and all decisions are by consensus.

Juan is in the process of applying for political asylum, though the chances of acceptance in this country for a Salvadoran are still slim. His family in Salvador are very needy and he finds it difficult to accumulate and send the funds they need. He has been working with various people to acquire job skills in addition to his abilities in farming and woodwork. We are always on the lookout for more opportunities for Juan. The committee recently decided to make a major cash advance to Juan to ease his mind about a house payment and continuing monthly expenses that are mounting for his wife and children (this included \$715 from the Friends Sanctuary account). A major fund-raising mailing and reception is now underway to replenish these funds. As of this writing we have raised over \$1000 with this fund-raiser, a great success. Juan is having English lessons at least twice a week and often more, but progress is slow as he is not forced into using English very often. His clothing situation is now remedied thanks to many donations from supporting groups. In the future we hope to explore ways to make Juan more a part of the community and to search out opportunities for Juan to tell his story to interested people in our community.

I’ll be writing at least one more piece 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

New Website

After thirteen years of service, the Ithaca Monthly Meeting website has been revamped and relaunched by the Communication Committee. The new framework is robust and easy to maintain. You can now find the weekly photographs of the announcements board there! Please visit ithacamonthlymeeting.org and check it out.

— Marin Clarkberg

Groups.io

Want to help us evaluate an alternative to the Meeting’s current Cornell-based listserv? The Communications Committee is experimenting with groups.io, and we’d like you to take a look. We’ve set up three subgroups: announcements, community and witness. All messages distributed there are archived for future reference.

To subscribe, send a blank email to: announcements+subscribe@IMMRSF.groups.io

— Marin Clarkberg, Melissa Travis Dunham, and Nancy Riffer

Ithaca Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

Monthly Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business, February 16, 2020

Clerk: Gina Varrichio
Recording Clerks: Marin Clarkberg, Blair Jennings

(The @ signifies that the minute has been read and approved during Meeting. Please note that copies of all annual reports provided during this Meeting are on file with and available from the Clerk or Recording Clerk.)

2020.2.1 Opening Worship

Ithaca Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends met in Monthly Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business on February 16, 2020. At 12:25 pm, seventeen Friends gathered and settled into worship.

Clerk reviewed the agenda and recognized Michelle Brimage who was holding the Meeting in the Light.

2020.2.2 Communications Committee Report

Melissa Travis Dunham read a prepared report from the Communications Committee. The committee proposes migrating the meeting's thirteen-year-old website to a contemporary instance of Wordpress. The current framework is dated and difficult for non-specialists to maintain. In addition, the new instance would better enable the committee to make use of Wordpress "plug-ins" that could offer additional functionality to the website. The website is an evolving project, and Friends are encouraged to contact the committee if they have questions or suggestions for the site. Friends approved migrating the meeting's website to a new Wordpress instance. @

Melissa described that the committee is also looking into groups.io as a way to facilitate email communications. Friends received the report. @

2020.2.3 Naming Committee Report

Nancy Riffer from the Naming Committee brought forth the names of Ellie Rosenberg and Barbara Barry as new members to the Nominating Committee. Both terms would run through 2022. The committee also brings forth Nancy Gabriel's name to serve one additional year—through 2021. Friends approved the nominations.

2020.2.4 Nominating Committee

Pat Sewell from the Nominating Committee brought forth the following nominations: Laurence Clarkberg to the Third Street Meetinghouse Committee, Pat Sewell as Treasurer, Dreia Spies to the Hector Meetinghouse Committee, and Jim Grant as the Area Congregations Together (ACT) liaison. All nominations are for

three-year terms, expiring at the end of 2022. Friends approved the nominations. Corrections to the distributed list can go to Marin Clarkberg. @

2020.2.5 Clerk's Report: Memorial Minutes

Clerk shared that there is a need for memorial minutes for four recently deceased Friends: Minutes for Carol Kimball and Ann Rhodin are being drafted, and Clerk expects these will be read at March's Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business. Authors are still needed to draft memorial minutes for Will White and Marion DaGrossa. Friends who have contributions for any of these minutes or who have ideas as to who might draft the minutes for Will and Marion please contact the Clerk. Friends received the report. @

2020.2.6 M&W: Transfer of Membership for Wallace Watson

Nancy Riffer reported that Wallace Watson requested that his membership be transferred to Sandy Spring Monthly Meeting in Sandy Spring, Maryland where Wallace now resides. Friends approved the transfer. @

2020.2.7 Annual Reports

Annual reports from 2019 were read from the following committees: Nominating (read by Pat Sewell), Young Friends (read by Lenora Schneller), Earthcare (read by Elizabeth Keokosky), Ad Hoc Working Group for Immigrant Support (read by Garry Thomas), and Peace and Social Justice (read by Elizabeth Schneider). Following each report, there was a period of waiting worship. Friends gratefully and lovingly received the reports. Friends expressed a desire for reports to be digitally preserved and available. @

2020.2.8 Other Concerns

A Friend asked about the total 2019 donation to Kitchen Cupboard and whether it had declined compared to previous years. This question was referred to the new treasurer. A Friend reported that documentation that was submitted in the Treasurer's mailbox was lost. The past and current treasurer are working on the issue. @

Twelve Friends settled into silent worship at 2pm before adjourning. Our next regular Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business will be held at the rise of Meeting on March 8, 2020.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marin Clarkberg, Recording Clerk

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. 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!

March 2020 Calendar of Ithaca Monthly Meeting

QuakerSpeak! discussion Sunday, March 1, 9:30a

First and third Sundays, gather in the library to watch a QuakerSpeak video and discuss. QuakerSpeak is a video series on YouTube. Come once or every time.

Earthcare Committee Sunday, March 1, Rise of Meeting

All are welcome to join us on first Sundays.

Quaker Guys Lunch Thursday, March 5, noon

Lunch for Friendly Men and those who don't mind talking with them. We meet at the Ten Forward Café in Autumn Leaves.

Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business Sunday, March 8, Rise of Meeting

Join the decision-making process. Proposed agenda items should be sent to our clerk, Gina Varrichio, by the preceding *Monday*.

Soup and a Movie Friday, March 13, 5:30p

Ruth Yarrow and Michelle Brimage will offer soup and bread, followed by a film (at 6:30) about racial justice and discussion.

QuakerSpeak! discussion Sunday, March 15, 9:30a

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

Friendly Women Fellowship Friday, March 20, 6:30p

Gathering above the hubbub at Wegman's cafe's second floor. Grab some food or not and enjoy conversation. For more information, contact Kris at kris.altucher@gmail.com.

On Sundays

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

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

Quaker Talent Night Saturday, March 21, 6p

Yes, Friends, Quakers have *talents*! It is time to trot them out, so dust off your tap shoes and gather up your works of art! Bring knitting, singing, baking, and anything else you're somewhat good at to share with your Friends. Dish-to-pass and displays, followed by performances.

Newsletter submission due Thursday, March 26, 5p

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

Soup and a Movie Friday, March 27, 5:30p

Ruth Yarrow and Michelle Brimage will offer soup and bread, followed by a film (at 6:30) about racial justice and discussion.

Last Sunday Dish-to-Pass Brunch Sunday, March 29, Rise of Meeting

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

ARCH Discussion Sunday, March 29, Following Brunch

ARCH (Aging Resources Consultation and Help) volunteers will host an informal discussion about caregiving. Topics include resources for caregivers, discussion of our experiences of caregiving, what support do you as a caregiver in our Meeting need, and how the meeting can be supportive of caregivers. For questions please contact Barbara Chase or Bronwyn Mohlke.

Note: Easter, April 12

We will have a sunrise Meeting for Worship on Easter, April 12th, from 6-7 am. All friends are invited to gather for a dish-to-pass brunch starting at 9:00 am prior to 10:30 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.