

**2010
ADVANCE REPORTS**

**New York Yearly Meeting
of the
Religious Society of Friends**

**Prepared for Summer Sessions
July 18–24, 2010, Silver Bay, N.Y.**

Please use the documents of this book throughout the week in preparation for business sessions, committee meetings, and interest groups sponsored by committees or affiliated organizations.

THIS COPY BELONGS TO

NEW YORK YEARLY MEETING ADVANCE REPORTS

The documents of this publication were printed in advance of the 2010–2011 Yearbook for consideration at sessions of NYYM.

Please note that the budgets and expenditures of many committees may be obtained through reference to the Treasurer’s Report. Committees having their own treasurers submitted financial reports. All financial reports are for the 2009 calendar year.

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NEW YORK YEARLY MEETING

Fall Sessions

November 13–15, 2009

Seton Hall University, South Orange, New Jersey

Saturday, November 14, 2009, 10:00 A.M.

Heather Cook, Clerk

Joseph Garren, Acting Assistant Clerk

Elaine Learnard, Recording Clerk

Robin Alpern, Reading Clerk

2009-11-01. The meeting remained gathered following morning open worship. Out of the silence, Clerk Heather Cook (Chatham-Summit) greeted Friends, saying she felt God's love, the pulse of the universe beating among us today. She shared an image of each of us bringing our stick of fire for today, to be part of—and witness to—something much greater than what we can do on our own. As a Yearly Meeting we hold each other accountable as we do our part in the world, with love. She asked if we are willing to offer what we have brought, and let it go, and to become the unconditional love that we experience from the Divine. She introduced those at the clerks' table.

2009-11-02. The reading clerk called the roll, asking Friends to rise by regional meeting. All regions were represented.

2009-11-03. Jotham Bailey (Chatham-Summit), of the host committee of All Friends Regional Meeting, welcomed us and shared the hope that at the rise of Sessions, we feel empowered to do our work in the world. He provided some information for the practical aspects of the day.

2009-11-04. The reading clerk read a history of Somerset Hills Monthly Meeting prepared by Carol Coulthurst. The history is attached.

2009-11-05. Barbara Menzel (New Brunswick), clerk of Shrewsbury-Plainfield Half-Yearly Meeting, reported that on September 19, 2009, at the Shrewsbury-Plainfield Half-Yearly Meeting, Somerset Hills Monthly Meeting was laid down. Its members have transferred to other meetings (primarily Rahway & Plainfield), and the funds in its accounts have been distributed to the other meetings in the Half-Yearly Meeting. Somerset Hills Worship Group is meeting at the Episcopalian Convent of St. John the Baptist in Mendham, N.J., under the care of Rahway & Plainfield Monthly Meeting, as approved by that meeting

on September 20, 2009. Carol Coulthurst is serving as a contact person for the worship group. Friends received this report.

A Friend reported having grown up in the neighborhood of Somerset Hills Monthly Meeting and, though he never attended, he was aware of the Quaker presence. The life of a monthly meeting, he said, is never wasted.

2009-11-06. The minutes were read and approved.

2009-11-07. The reading clerk read #14 of the Advices and Queries from *Faith and Practice* of Britain Yearly Meeting:

Are your meetings for church affairs held in a spirit of worship and in dependence on the guidance of God? Remember that we do not seek a majority decision nor even consensus. As we wait patiently for divine guidance our experience is that the right way will open and we shall be led into unity.

2009-11-08. The Clerk introduced Jeffrey Aaron (New Brunswick), clerk of General Services Coordinating Committee (GSCC), to bring forward the business of that section, noting that its origins lay in supporting the work of the Witness, Nurture and Ministry coordinating committees. Jeffrey remarked that as he has begun his work as clerk, he is deeply moved by the work that has gone before on General Services and by the on-going work of the yearly meeting.

2009-11-09. The GSCC clerk introduced treasurer Susan Bingham (Montclair) who gave the Treasurer's report. As of October 31, 2009, the closing balance of the operating fund was \$143,018 and the net difference between income and expenses was -\$60,986. This net is greater than we usually have at this time of year; she reminded us that in 2008, the difference was -\$13,391. She noted that this gap narrows every year in November and December, and she expects the same to happen this year. The full report has details on all funds, section and committee expenses and income, and is on the NYYM Web site or you may contact the treasurer to obtain it. Friends received the report.

2009-11-10. The GSCC clerk introduced Steven Mohlke (Ithaca), clerk of the Financial Services Committee, who began by saying that though it would be a great relief if he could announce that the budget were balanced, he cannot. Noting the ways the budget affects Yearly Meeting work, he imagined what could happen by doubling the budget (additional staff or youth/young adult programming, removing financial barriers to attending Sessions, making solid commitments

to wider Quaker bodies), saying that none of this money, in his view, would be wasted. Were we to cut the budget by half, while we would still be a yearly meeting, much of our work would die on the vine. He pointed out that some of the ways the budget gap has been narrowed this year are unsustainable, as they rely on funding that has come from our endowment or from funds that must be replenished in future yearly meeting budgets.

He talked about the structural challenges in the budget process, that there is not a specified person who has the authority to say, “We have sixty good programs and these are the fifty-five we are going to do this year,” nor do we have an overall vision that would allow us to prioritize together. Financial Services is not hearing that the work being done is bad but rather that monthly meetings cannot sustain the cost at this time. He also hears support for the work despite the costs. He noted that there continues to be disconnection, from a faith perspective—a moving away from God—with committees vying with each other for the same pot of money, and monthly meetings not understanding the work of yearly meeting. He suggested that people could choose to connect around budgets and money, as individuals or monthly meetings. For example, one might pick a budget line one doesn’t know much about and learn about it, share one’s own money story with honesty and courage, or support one’s monthly meeting in providing scholarships for attending Yearly Meeting events.

Financial Services has made the important transition from “assessment” to “covenant donation,” and a critical piece of this transition is communication. Financial Services has worked hard to name the programs of NYYM, calculate costs and get that information out to monthly meetings. Something not yet done is to receive feedback from monthly meetings and turn it into priorities that determine the work of NYYM. He told us that four years ago he stood in his monthly meeting and asked what NYYM was all about. Responding to that still small voice within, in search of the answer, he ended up as clerk of Financial Services. He closed with the picture of how, when we talk about our monthly meeting budget, we really listen to one another and try to understand, not with a fear that something will be taken away but with the desire to know what is necessary to do our work. His sense is that if we did this in Yearly Meeting, we would not have to cut anything, because all our work would align and feel like one. Friends rose to speak their thoughts about the yearly meeting budget process and challenges. The Clerk reminded us that time is allowed for us to consider the proposed budget in all three business meetings of Fall Sessions, if necessary.

2009-11-11. The reading clerk read #12 of the Advices and Queries from *Faith and Practice* of Britain Yearly Meeting:

When you are preoccupied and distracted in meeting let wayward and disturbing thoughts give way quietly to your awareness of God's presence among us and in the world. Receive the vocal ministry of others in a tender and creative spirit. Reach for the meaning deep within it, recognising that even if it is not God's word for you, it may be so for others. Remember that we all share responsibility for the meeting for worship whether our ministry is in silence or through the spoken word.

2009-11-12. The GSCC clerk then called on Christopher Sammond (Bulls Head-Oswego), the general secretary, to address us. Christopher began with a thank-you to all who held him in prayer during his personal difficulties this summer, saying he has felt that he has been carried on a cloud of prayer. He then talked about how monthly meetings are changing how they deal with the question of money, some moving from passively receiving money to active fundraising that has been, for some, transformative. He raised the question of whether we are ready to let go of what we are and what we have been and move on to what we can become. He told us that he hears from those interested in being Friends that they are finding it hard to find a way into a monthly meeting. He has heard from people such as those who are Christ-centered, or with limited means, or with good incomes, or young, or who are people of color, or people right-of-center politically, or people who were formerly incarcerated, that they must struggle to stay or become part of us. If we can move away from our set of narrow requirements for who can be Quaker, we will not have to do much more to have advancement. Let us stop trimming the roots of our little tree, plant the tree by a stream of living waters and let it grow. Friends offered ministry in response to the general secretary's message. Friends received the report. His written report is attached.

2009-11-13. The reading clerk read #19 of the Advices and Queries from *Faith and Practice* of Britain Yearly Meeting:

Rejoice in the presence of children and young people in your meeting and recognise the gifts they bring. Remember that the meeting as a whole shares a responsibility for every child in its care. Seek for them as for yourself a full development of God's gifts and the abundant life Jesus tells us can be ours. How do you share your deepest beliefs with them,

while leaving them free to develop as the spirit of God may lead them? Do you invite them to share their insights with you? Are you ready both to learn from them and to accept your responsibilities towards them?

2009-11-14. The Clerk welcomed the Junior Yearly Meeting, who had joined us from their sessions, and who make us more whole by their presence.

2009-11-15. The GSCC clerk introduced Heloise Rathbone (Brooklyn), clerk of the Personnel Committee, who presented a report from the Personnel Committee on the general secretary's 2008 request for a change in the language of his written job description. The report is attached. Friends received the report.

2009-11-16. The GSCC clerk introduced the clerk of the Sessions Committee, John Cooley (Central Finger Lakes). He reminded Friends that Summer Sessions will be a week earlier than usual: July 18–24, 2010, at Silver Bay YMCA of the Adirondacks, pending contract approval. The report is attached. Friends received the report.

2009-11-17. The reading clerk read #7 of the Advices and Queries from *Faith and Practice* of Britain Yearly Meeting:

Be aware of the spirit of God at work in the ordinary activities and experience of your daily life. Spiritual learning continues throughout life, and often in unexpected ways. There is inspiration to be found all around us, in the natural world, in the sciences and arts, in our work and friendships, in our sorrows as well as in our joys. Are you open to new light, from whatever source it may come? Do you approach new ideas with discernment?

2009-11-18. Friends approved the minutes of this session, with the understanding that they would be revised to condense the descriptions of reports that are available in writing.

Seton Hall University, South Orange, New Jersey
Saturday, November 14, 2009, 3:45 P.M.

Heather M. Cook, Clerk
Joseph Garren, Acting Assistant Clerk
Roger Dreisbach-Williams, Recording Clerk
Robin Alpern, Reading Clerk

2009-11-19. As we settled into worship, the reading clerk read Advice and Query #8 from Britain Yearly Meeting's *Faith and Practice*:

Worship is our response to an awareness of God. We can worship alone, but when we join with others in expectant waiting we may discover a deeper sense of God's presence. We seek a gathered stillness in our meetings for worship so that all may feel the power of God's love drawing us together and leading us.

2009-11-20. The Clerk introduced those at the clerks' table.

2009-11-21. The Consent Agenda, which was distributed on the Yearly Meeting's global e-mail list earlier in the week and has been available in hard copy at the registration table since this morning, was presented for approval.

Friends approved nominations and requests for release from service (*see below*).

Friends approved a separate minute for Paula McClure's service as assistant treasurer (*see below*).

Friends approved changes to Sessions Committee *Handbook* description, releasing reading clerks and recording clerks from the committee, and increasing the number of at-large members from seven to nine.

Friends approved changes to "Funding from Outside Sources" in the General Services section of the *Handbook*.

Appointments to Service

Assistant clerk 2010: Joseph B. Garren, Brooklyn
Ministry Coordinating Committee 2010: John Perry ('09),
Bulls Head-Oswego
Committee to Revise *Faith and Practice* 2012: Shirley Way ('09),
Central Finger Lakes
Sufferings 2012: Catharine Thomas ('09), Chatham-Summit
Personnel 2012: Keith Johnson ('09), Chatham-Summit
Sessions 2012: Martha Gurvich ('06), Wilton

Epistle 2011: Noel Palmer ('07), Westbury; Elizabeth Gordon ('09),
Binghamton
Friends United Meeting 2010, alternate: Ann Davidson ('09),
Farmington
Oakwood Friends School 2012: David Eskin, ('09), Purchase
Elsie K. Powell House Inc. 2013: Louise Tiano ('08), Rochester
Committee on Conscientious Objection to Paying for War 2012:
Ann Geiger ('09), Butternuts
Indian Affairs 2012: Grace Perez de la Garza ('09), Fredonia
New York Council of Churches, Chaplaincy Board 2011:
Alice Houghtaling ('09), Schenectady
Quaker Earthcare Witness Representative 2012:
Elizabeth (Buffy) Curtis ('09), Mohawk Valley

Releases from Service

Advancement, co-opted as clerk: Chad Dell, Manasquan
Committee to Revise *Faith and Practice* 2012: Noel Palmer, Westbury,
listed in error
State of Society 2010: Janice Ninan, Collins
Aging Concerns 2011: Linda Chidsey, Housatonic
Aging Concerns 2012: Glen Bibler, Brooklyn
Epistle 2011: Gale Swiontkowski, Amawalk
Indian Affairs 2011: Marcella Younger, Rockland
Quaker Earthcare Witness Representative: Kristina Keefe-Perry,
Rochester
Quaker Earthcare Witness Representative 2012: Patricia Chernoff,
Morningside

2009-11-22. On July 23, 2009, New York Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends approved Paula R. McClure of Montclair Monthly Meeting as an assistant treasurer.

2009-11-23. Christine DeRoller (Old Chatham), clerk of the Young Friends In Residence (YFIR) Committee, introduced YFIR staff members Anna Obermayer (Binghamton) and Franklin Crump. Natalie Braun (Old Chatham), also on the staff, is in Ecuador. YFIR is an emerging program for New York Yearly Meeting, a dual program for young adult leaders and sixth- to ninth-grade youth. The young adults live in intentional spiritual community, participate in the local meeting, and facilitate youth (6th–9th grade) retreats. The YFIR staff are currently living in Beloved Community House in Newfield, N.Y., and working with their host meeting (Perry City) leading Quakerism 101 programs and other activities. The YFIR staff expect to run their

first conference on December 5–6, mostly a planning conference to get input from youth and their parents about the direction the youth programming should take. They are looking for Friends to serve on the support committee, as elders and as spiritual mentors. Friends received this report.

2009-11-24. Frederick Dettmer (Purchase), clerk of Witness Coordinating Committee (WCC), spoke about the Sharing Fund: WCC has set the goal for 2010 at \$60,000 and we are part way toward this goal.

2009-11-25. The WCC clerk introduced Elizabeth Enloe, Regional Director of the New York Metropolitan Regional Office (NYMRO) of American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), who spoke about the pain of contracting (AFSC program activities have been reduced by half) and closing some offices, as well as about the opportunities that AFSC has for the future. AFSC programs around the world are sharing their experience and learning from one another, rather than working on their own as before. “We are present where people are experiencing violence” has become the unifying theme of all AFSC programs. AFSC is working with NYYM committees who share in this work. Friends asked questions about support for First Peoples programs, rebuilding the budget and support for the organization. Friends received the report.

2009-11-26. Advice and Query #33 of Britain Yearly Meeting’s *Faith and Practice* was read:

Are you alert to practices here and throughout the world which discriminate against people on the basis of who or what they are or because of their beliefs? Bear witness to the humanity of all people, including those who break society’s conventions or its laws. Try to discern new growing points in social and economic life. Seek to understand the causes of injustice, social unrest and fear. Are you working to bring about a just and compassionate society which allows everyone to develop their capacities and fosters the desire to serve?

2009-11-27. The WCC clerk introduced wording on a Policy on Bequests to the Sharing Fund, which is available online at nyym.org/witness/wcc/shar-fund-beq-09jul.pdf and has been available in hard copy at the registration table since this morning. An endowment will be created to support the work of the Sharing Fund. Friends received the report.

2009-11-28. The WCC clerk introduced the following minute for consideration:

Upon the discernment of Friends during sessions of Nurture Coordinating Committee and Witness Coordinating Committee, Friends approve transferring the representative to Quaker Earthcare Witness and the Earthcare Working Group from the care of the Nurture Coordinating Committee to the care of the Witness Coordinating Committee. In connection with this transfer, the budget item for an annual donation to Quaker Earthcare Witness in the amount of \$150 should be transferred from the Nurture Coordinating Committee sections of the budget and financial reports of NYYM to the Witness Coordinating Committee sections of the budget and financial reports of NYYM.

Friends approved.

2009-11-29. Steve Mohlke (Ithaca), clerk of Financial Services, indicated that Budget Saturday in mid-October ended with a \$30,000 gap. Through cuts and fund raising that gap is now \$4,000. This is one percent of the budget. We have a short-term problem of how to get a budget for 2010, and a long-term problem of how to deal with the unsustainable practices in this budget. The Financial Services Committee recommends that Coordinating Committees reduce their budgets by a minimum of one percent.

The Conflict Transformation Committee reported from the floor that they will reduce their budget to \$500 and ask for support from those who use their services.

The Meeting was not ready to approve the proposed budget.

2009-11-30. The Meeting approved further discussions at Coordinating Committee Meetings and with Financial Services as our operating budget for 2010 is prepared.

2009-11-31. The minutes of the afternoon session were read and approved with corrections.

2009-11-32. The Meeting closed with open worship.

Chatham Summit Meeting, Chatham, New Jersey
Sunday, November 15, 2009, 9:00 A.M.

Heather Cook, Clerk
Joseph Garren, Assistant Clerk
Elaine Learnard, Recording Clerk
Sandy Segal, Reading Clerk

2009-11-33. The meeting opened with silent worship. Out of the silence, Clerk Heather Cook read from Isaiah 55:1–3 (New Revised Standard Version). She introduced those at the clerks' table, reviewed the agenda for the morning and expressed deep appreciation for the work of the host committee of All Friends Regional Meeting.

2009-11-34. The reading clerk read #17 of the Advices and Queries from *Faith and Practice* of Britain Yearly Meeting:

Do you respect that of God in everyone though it may be expressed in unfamiliar ways or be difficult to discern? Each of us has a particular experience of God and each must find the way to be true to it. When words are strange or disturbing to you, try to sense where they come from and what has nourished the lives of others. Listen patiently and seek the truth which other people's opinions may contain for you. Avoid hurtful criticism and provocative language. Do not allow the strength of your convictions to betray you into making statements or allegations that are unfair or untrue. Think it possible that you may be mistaken.

2009-11-35. Steve Mohlke (Ithaca), clerk of the Financial Services Committee, summarized the budget proceedings to date. All four Coordinating Committees reported that they have committed to reduce their budgets by one percent, which means that Financial Services has a balanced budget to recommend. The details of the actual cuts will be available to be approved at Spring Sessions. Friends approved the proposed 2010 budget of \$520,440, which includes expected income of \$520,440, including the anticipated covenant donations of \$458,350.

2009-11-36. Sandra Beer (Old Chatham), the incoming clerk of the Financial Services Committee, brought a recommendation that the Liaison Committee and the general secretary be asked to propose a process to guide the Yearly Meeting in discerning who we are, how we are led and how we support the work of those leadings and needs. The Liaison Committee is asked to bring this proposal to Spring Ses-

sions. The Liaison Committee is encouraged to co-opt other members to help in the development of this process. Friends approved.

2009-11-37. The minutes were read and approved.

2009-11-38. The reading clerk read #15 of the Advices and Queries from *Faith and Practice* of Britain Yearly Meeting:

Do you take part as often as you can in meetings for church affairs? Are you familiar enough with our church government to contribute to its disciplined processes? Do you consider difficult questions with an informed mind as well as a generous and loving spirit? Are you prepared to let your insights and personal wishes take their place alongside those of others or be set aside as the meeting seeks the right way forward? If you cannot attend, uphold the meeting prayerfully.

2009-11-39. Frederick Dettmer, clerk of Witness Coordinating Committee (WCC), reported that a minute on access to health care was approved by Brooklyn Monthly Meeting on October 4, 2009, was endorsed by New York Quarterly Meeting on October 25, 2009, and was forwarded to the Yearly Meeting. Similar minutes have been approved by other monthly and regional meetings. Following discernment, Witness Coordinating Committee proposes the following minute:

We are deeply concerned that the medical treatment currently provided in the United States is beyond the reach of many people.

Our belief is that every person should be treated compassionately. Each of us has unique value, and all deserve to live to the best of our potential. Health care is a basic necessity of life that our society has an obligation to provide.

Every person should have access to quality medical treatment. We seek a just, sustainable, and simplified health care solution.

The Clerk of the Yearly Meeting is directed to (1) send a letter containing the Minute on Access to Health Care to all relevant elected Federal officials, (2) forward the minute to the monthly meetings, inviting them to take action on the minute as they discern to be appropriate, and (3) in consultation with the Communications Committee, send the minute to media within the areas encompassed by New York Yearly Meeting.

Friends approved this minute. Friends asked that the minutes show that the minute brought forward from Brooklyn Monthly Meeting was first labored over and approved by Buffalo Monthly Meeting.

2009-11-40. The WCC clerk referred the body to the written material provided concerning becoming a cosponsor of a commission being formed to hold a hearing (in March 2010 at Riverside Church in New York City) to investigate and issue a report on rights of conscience among persons in the military. He then brought the following minute for consideration, based on the WCC minute #11-09-04:

New York Yearly Meeting (1) approves becoming a cosponsor of the Truth Commission on Conscience in War, and (2) asks the Clerk of NYYM, the clerk of Witness Coordinating Committee, the Committee on Conscientious Objection to Paying for War, and the Peace Concerns coordinator to carry this concern forward, including naming representatives. Friends approved.

2009-11-41. Friends approved the minutes of this session.

2009-11-42. The Clerk read from Isaiah 55:12:

For you shall go out in joy,
and be led back in peace;
the mountains and the hills before you
shall burst into song,
and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

2009-11-43. Friends settled into open worship in preparation for joining worship with Chatham-Summit Monthly Meeting.

Attachments

Somerset Hills Monthly Meeting History

History of Somerset Hills Monthly Meeting

The Quakers who began the Somerset Hills Monthly Meeting originally worshipped under the care of Rahway-Plainfield Monthly Meeting, in Plainfield, N.J., shortly after World War II. Several families who lived in Somerset County decided that they were numerous enough to begin a worship group closer to their homes. They began as a worship group under the care of Rahway-Plainfield in 1946. In 1955, they petitioned the Shrewsbury-Plainfield Half-Yearly Meeting for permission to form their own monthly meeting.

At first, they met in each other's homes, until the Bernardsville library became available for them to use on First Day mornings. An oil picture of one of those gatherings, painted by Dwight Dobbins, now hangs in the home of a descendent of the original group. For many years, the library was the comfortable home of Somerset Hills. The group only met during the school year, never in the summer, reasoning that with such a small group, there never would be enough Friends during the summer months. They continued to meet in the library until its board of directors decided that the Friends had to find another meeting place.

We began meeting in the Brookside Community Club in Mendham Township in 1983 as a "temporary" measure. It was a good place, with a large room, with a kitchen and two lavatories, a paved parking lot and no maintenance problems for the meeting. The drawback was that it was only one large room, with no place for a First Day school.

Somerset Hills began to look for another near-by facility to house our children. We found such a place, directly across the street at the Brookside Community Church. We were allowed to use one of their rooms, and given a key to the building, and our problems were solved!

Sadly for Somerset Hills, many people in the area found the Brookside Community Church an agreeable and hospitable home, and the church grew. Soon they needed every available space for their own parishioners, and once again, Somerset Hills drew back and re-considered its options. Without a meeting house of our own and with the cost of renting or buying property so high, it was beginning to look no longer possible for us to stay in the area. In addition, some of our members had moved away, others retired to warmer climes, and some had died.

In 2008, there were only five Friends in the meeting, one of whom is a member of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. We had several attenders who came to enjoy the silent worship, but there were too few people to maintain a viable meeting for worship. It was suggested that we relocate again, this time to the Episcopal Convent of Saint John the Baptist, also in Mendham, N.J. We investigated the site, found it warm and welcoming, and sent word to the Brookside Community Club that, after making it our home for twenty-five years, we had to change our location.

The meeting had already notified the Shrewsbury-Plainfield Half-Yearly Meeting of our continuing problems, and they granted us permission to make the change from a monthly meeting to that of a worship group, under the care of Rahway-Plainfield Monthly Meeting. Back to our beginning!

It has been an interesting and frustrating experience to try to grow and expand our silent form of worship amid a growing sense that the world is not the same place as it was back in 1955, when our adventure began. Perhaps we might have avoided this sad ending of the laying down of our meeting if we had had a meeting house, which would have given us a much more stable and visible presence in the area.

Carol Coulthurst, clerk, Somerset Hills Worship Group

General Secretary's Report

At a time when we are facing a serious budget crunch, I think it is a good moment to review how we are doing in general, and to reassess our priorities. The charge given in 1999 to the Ad Hoc Committee on the Function of New York Yearly Meeting was "to discern how the organization of New York Yearly Meeting can best participate in the continuing renewal of the local meetings, the quarterly and regional meetings, and the Religious Society of Friends as a whole." How well have we been doing this work? What could and should we be doing better? The answers to these questions may influence budget decisions this year, and possibly redirect some of our efforts in the years to come.

In looking at how we are doing, I have focused on membership, attendance, how much energy there has been for new initiatives, spiritual vitality, relative ease or difficulty in finding nominees to support the work, and financial support. Some of this examination will be quite subjective, and may open the door to fruitful discussion.

Membership

First, a note about how we count membership: Looking at membership numbers is far from an exact science. Yearly meeting staff compiles data given to us by our monthly meetings. Some years, some monthly meetings do not offer us revised numbers. There are also times when the report from a monthly meeting does not reconcile with their report from the previous year. These times are noted with footnotes.

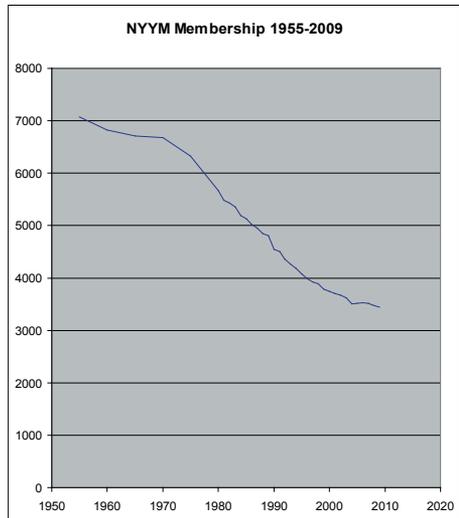
We also have many Friends who, though they are no longer worshipping with us, still find meaning in being considered a part of their monthly meeting, visiting on rare occasions, and frequently contributing funds for its support. Adult Friends who have grown up in a meeting and moved away and Friends who have retired elsewhere make up most of this group.

Some monthly meetings also have Friends on their rolls who have not been in contact for a considerable time. Some of our meetings have sought to reach out to such Friends on their rolls, to see if they still wish to be included. Other meetings have not done so. It is virtually impossible for us to know just how much of this “dead wood” there is on our membership rolls. Even coming up with criteria for determining who does and does not constitute “dead wood” would be difficult. It is equally difficult to know if there were similar amounts of “dead wood” in 1955, 1975, and 1995. Trying to ascertain what is an accurate baseline is less fruitful than looking at the change from one year to the next. In doing so, I am assuming a comparable amount of “dead wood” in all the years on the following chart.

As you can see from this chart, we are still declining in membership, though the rate of decline has decreased markedly, almost leveling off. While I would obviously prefer growth instead of decrease, the change in rate is moderate good news, and I hope the bottom of a parabolic curve about to ascend again.

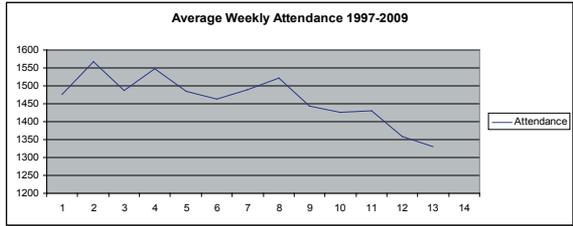
Attendance

Our monthly meetings also report average attendance on First Days. In many respects, this is a much more useful indicator of how we are doing than membership numbers.



The following chart graphs our reported average attendance from 1997 to the present:

In some ways, this chart paints a more negative picture than is accurate. In 2005, point 9 on this chart, we started



counting attendance at Nine Partners Monthly Meeting/Lyall Federated Church differently. Before that time, we had counted all in attendance at worship. After that time, we counted only those attending who named themselves as Friends. This change resulted in a reduction of about 75 Friends, more than half of the drop in the last thirteen years.

That factor aside, our attendance had been oscillating up and down within a certain range, not a cause for concern. The last few years' data show a decrease that goes outside that range. This decline in attendance causes me much greater concern than our numbers on membership. If we did not have new people coming in, I would be even more concerned. But half of the monthly meetings and worship groups that shared a state of society report last year reported newcomers, new attenders, and/or new members. Conditions vary widely from meeting to meeting, but I feel that it is fair to state that we need to address retention significantly more than we need to ramp up our efforts at outreach.

Part of that effort needs to be becoming aware of how we are making it hard for some of those who would like to be with us, to do so. In the past year, I have heard from young adult Friends, Christ-centered Friends, Friends with political views to the right of center, formerly incarcerated Friends, and Friends of Color that they are all having difficulty finding a way to be a part of our monthly meetings. I have heard from Friends of lesser economic means that they are struggling to be active in the work of the Yearly Meeting. Each one of these is troubling in itself, but taken in aggregate, they paint a picture of a Society that is more closed than open. I am sure that that is not what any of us wants. What do we need to address to change this?

New Initiatives

One way of gauging the vitality of a group is to look at how much energy it has for new initiatives. When I consider the initiatives of just the last few years, I am deeply impressed by what Friends in this Yearly Meeting have been faithful to. Here is a sampling. Perhaps

you can add more:

- The Aging Resources Consultation and Help, ARCH, program started up.
- The Spiritual Nurture Working Group was formed, and created an upcoming series of retreats.
- Collaborations are under way with AVP and AFSC on prison ministry.
- The Personnel Committee is in the process of a total revision of the *Personnel Handbook*.
- We began sending peacebuilding and humanitarian aid to Friends in the Republic of Georgia.
- We started a new worship group at Cayuga Correctional Facility and the Bedford-Stuyvesant worship group at the Redemption Center.
- We rekindled the worship group at Dansville, N.Y., and are increasing the number of worship meetings per month at Sullivan and Woodbourne Prison Worship Groups.
- The Communication Committee is in the process of constructing a new Web site.
- The Young Friends in Residence Program was envisioned and made a reality.
- The new Youth Committee has taken on the work recommended by the Task Group on Youth.
- The Financial Services and Communication Committees collaborated with staff to better communicate the substance of the work done at a YM level.
- The First Day School Working Group formed and is up and running.
- The new Ministry and Pastoral Care Committee has been formed and starting its work.
- Spring and Fall Sessions youth groups have become a part of our practice, supported by JYM.
- We began holding Meetings for Discernment.

Spiritual Vitality

This facet of our collective condition is the most subjective and hardest to quantify. It is obviously expressed through all the other facets. My personal sense, informed by others' subjective comments, is that we are growing significantly, both as individuals and as a body, in depth and faithfulness. The Spiritual Nurture Task Group noted a sense of increased spiritual vitality and community as a result of the Drawing Out Gifts series, and has sensed that this spiritual charge has diminished some over time. With that in mind, they have created

a series of eight retreats designed to nurture those Friends enlivened by the first series, as well as to welcome in Friends who were not a part of that experience.

Friends' Willingness to Be Nominated

The current clerk of our Nominating Committee told me that despite shrinking economic resources of individuals, monthly meetings, and Yearly Meeting committees, she has experienced the same level of willingness, or better, by Friends asked to serve. She tempered this by saying that it is hard to separate Friends' willingness from the benefit of having committee members who are good at recognizing the gifts of Friends and inviting them to share those gifts. She said that the nominating process has also been helped by more committees doing work via conference call when possible.

One area she said she hopes we can improve upon is in nominating our younger Friends to committees. Three-year terms are difficult for Friends in high school and college to commit to.

Financial Support

Non-profits are facing an average shortfall of 40%. At Budget Saturday, we were facing a shortfall of about 5%. I have been moved by the degree of support that I have heard from our monthly meetings. Many have dug deep and stretched mightily. Some have done fundraisers in order to honor their covenant donation. Some have even gone back and increased that amount in response to the request from Financial Services.

I have heard great appreciation from Friends for the work of Financial Services in creating a project-based budget. They have commented that that approach, in conjunction with the standard budget spreadsheets, has given them a greater understanding of where the money goes than they ever had before. Without this work, I don't think that we would be in as good a financial position as we are right now.

Conclusions

Despite some reduction in numbers, we have greatly expanded the work we have been called to, addressing our need to deepen spiritually, to care for our children, young adults, and aged Friends, to be faithful in our witness, and work towards bridging the gap between our monthly meetings and the Yearly Meeting. We are continuing to lay the crucial foundations for growth in depth as well as numbers, and we are doing that work well. And we have done this while keeping the budget relatively flat since 2005.

And there is much yet to do. In my 2006 report to summer sessions, I named six areas to which we needed to give significant attention:

1. Closing the divide that separates monthly meetings from the Yearly Meeting organizational structure.
2. Coming to a unified, clear vision of who we are, where we are going, and why.
3. Passing on the substance of our faith to our children.
4. Becoming more skillful at resolving conflict.
5. Better welcoming and integrating the newcomers who are joining us.
6. Addressing the spiritual nurture of existing Friends.

We have done some work in all these areas, and yet I see all of these needs to still be somewhere between a state of “pressing” and “quite urgent.” Of these needs, I see bridging the monthly meeting/ Yearly Meeting gap, coming to a common vision, and developing a coordinated and coherent approach to how we nurture our children and youth, to be our greatest priorities.

We have this budget year, and perhaps one other, to take a really hard look at how we are addressing the above needs, and making some substantive changes, not just tweaking what we are already doing. This year’s budget is bolstered by many one-time adjustments that we cannot repeat next year. Even if the economic recovery proceeds well, it will be two years or so before most non-profits feel the benefit of that. We cannot assume much rosier conditions in the economy for our budget a year from now, or even in two or three. We cannot continue our present course without some substantial changes in how we raise money and how we spend it.

I see this budget crunch as a real opportunity for us to look at our priorities, break out of our unconscious attachment to the ways things are, and to look afresh at how God is leading us in our work together. We have just a little breathing room in which to come to a unified vision of our work as a body, a vision that is well connected to, and supported by our constituent monthly meetings, and to develop the fundraising mechanisms to support that vision adequately. If we do this well, it will build community, and release untapped energy as well as the financial resources to do the work that God calls us to do.

Christopher Sammond (Bulls Head-Oswego), general secretary

Personnel Committee Report

Proposal to change general secretary's job description

◆ History

- In 2002, specific discomfort was expressed by Friends with the notion of a pastor, or of reference to ministry at all, in the position of general secretary when the first report of the Staffing and Structure Committee was presented to the body at Summer Sessions for the purpose of establishing the position of a general secretary.
- In 2003, the recommendation was further seasoned and presented again without the references that were construed as naming the general secretary as a spiritual leader or pastor of the Yearly Meeting. The position was then approved.
- In October of 2008, a change in the job description was proposed by the general secretary for the purpose of reducing his federal taxes, and their use for warmaking, by virtue of his being able to receive an untaxed housing allowance as a minister. As noted to Friends several times, if the process advances, the net cost to New York Yearly Meeting, other than any possible bookkeeping, legal and accounting work to effect the change, will likely be less than the present cost thereafter, as certain benefits will be reduced because the salary per se will be reduced. The general secretary will also likely take home less pay for similar reasons.
- In December of 2008, the General Secretary's Supervisory Task Group initially approved the request, per their minute:

Christopher Sammond brought a concern to the General Secretary's Supervisory Task Group, in a letter dated October 29, 2008, that his job description as general secretary of NYYM be clarified as to the fact that the position of general secretary has functions of Friends ministry. The Task Group is in unity that the position of general secretary is ministry as understood by Friends and requests addition of language to this effect to the written understanding of the general secretary's job description.
- On January 20, 2009, Personnel Committee noted the following in its minutes:

The committee approved the following sense of a minute:
The performance of the position of general secretary of NYYM fulfills all requirements of Friends ministry.
There was also some discussion about whether this applied

to others on NYYM staff. The committee needs to discuss this further.

- The concern has also been discussed by General Services Coordinating Committee (GSCC) and reviewed by the clerk of the Ministry Coordinating Committee. A request was made by GSCC for wider input of Friends in light of the history of concerns about the job description.
- At a presentation at Summer Sessions 2009, Friends requested that the matter be deferred for further consideration of individual Friends and monthly meetings, and for their input to the Personnel Committee.
- ♦ Responses summary follows.
- ♦ Various aspects of the proposed change will require further consideration and possible action if and when there is approval by the body. These further concerns should be borne in mind as Friends consider the request:
 - There will need to be consideration of the implications to other staff and their particular ministries.
 - If this change in wording is approved by the body, then it falls to the Personnel Committee and the GSCC to decide whether this change is enough to meet the conditions set forth by the IRS for a housing allowance: As Quakers we do not easily meet the three qualifications that the IRS has set down for ministers and housing allowances, and their position has been revised and tightened in the last few years. It is this situation which has brought forth the articles and opinions that suggest we might not pass the approval of the IRS and thus might need to be audited, an event that could be financially expensive in terms of time that would need to be expended by our professional accountants and likely very time-consuming of our staff and volunteers, a serious concern even in the best of times.
 - If the proposal is approved, there will need to be separate consideration by Personnel if the committee is comfortable revising remuneration to include housing allowance. If so, the amounts will need to be decided upon.
 - What will be the implications for the advertising for and hiring of future individuals for this position with this revised job description and revised pay structure?

We need to do more discernment work on this request. More input from Friends to the committee about this concern will always be welcome as we strive to gain clarity about a possible recommendation.

Responses summary

To date, we have received 20 written responses from throughout the yearly meeting, which we have characterized in our perception as positive, negative or uncertain (or uncomfortable) and grouped by individuals and monthly meetings. Thirteen responses were from individuals, of which eight were negative and five uncertain. Of the seven monthly meetings that responded, four were positive, two negative, and one uncertain. We are very much aware that our interpretations are of course subjective characterizations.

The four positive responses, which were all from monthly meetings, were mostly simple minutes of support of the proposal. Uncertain responses indicated hesitation about the process and its various potential ramifications, while negative responses often expressed discomfort about the use of the term “ministry” for different reasons, including the implications of singling out an individual or employee within our midst, or the implication of having a “paid minister.” In addition, there was reference more than once to the concern expressed by the body during the original proposal for the job description that the position should not include ministry per se; therefore, this is a change that goes against that understanding. One Friend indicated that the current proposal felt like a “bait-and-switch.” One meeting and at least one individual indicated that the purpose of the change may not really be served in that it does not constitute war tax resistance, since it is not tax refusal, nor does it constitute tax witness, since it does not include any form of public statement; it simply will mean that fewer taxes will be paid because of the individual’s tax category, which will have no witness significance to IRS or other public entity, and furthermore, the reduced taxes will not necessarily reduce war taxes since all tax income goes into a common pot for all governmental expenditures, including items that we are all likely to support.

In addition to the written responses, there is the sense that there remains a “buzz” among Friends, many of whom may be uncertain or uncomfortable, but who have not put their discomfort down in words. Nevertheless, there is also the sense that the work of our general secretary has indeed included ministry as we know it, and that that also applies at least to the work of the associate secretary. Friends have frequently expressed appreciation of the hard work of our general secretary and of our staff in general.

Heloise Rathbone (Brooklyn), clerk, Personnel

Sessions Committee Report

Sessions Committee and the working group on Summer Sessions affordability and site selection met in September. Along with other business we reviewed results of the surveys that Friends had completed at Silver Bay during Summer Sessions, and the results from a later survey sent to meetings for distribution. The compiled comments and the statistics from both surveys are available for review.

The surveys brought helpful information on several other questions, but the most controversial issue was our suggestion at last Summer Sessions that 2010 Summer Sessions should be shortened from six to five days. Our working group and Sessions Committee as a whole felt that, whatever a numerical majority of survey participants favored, we were not clear to make the suggested change. Instead we are planning a six-day schedule in 2010. Members of our working group on affordability and future sites will be available to talk with anyone after lunch Sunday at Chatham-Summit meeting house. Look for our sign.

We continue to explore cost-saving measures, and ways of raising more funds for assistance in attending summer sessions. Working group members are seeking information from other sites and Silver Bay to see how a different place with significant cost advantage and facility benefits could compare.

Our next committee meeting for Summer Sessions planning is January 30. If you have suggestions about theme, format or special needs, let us hear from you as soon as you can.

Spring Sessions is being hosted by Farmington-Scipio Regional Meeting at Chautauqua Institution near Mayville, N.Y., April 9–11. A comfortable and convenient residential conference center at Chautauqua promotes easy attendance of sessions and committee meetings. Convenience of location for our westernmost Friends means a long trip for those from the east. Accommodations will be coordinated for anyone who wishes to plan a stopover stay with Friends along the way to Chautauqua or back home.

John Cooley (Central Finger Lakes), clerk, Sessions Committee

NEW YORK YEARLY MEETING

Spring Sessions

April 9–11, 2010

Chautauqua Institution, Chautauqua, New York

Saturday, April 10, 2010, 10:00 A.M.

Heather M. Cook, Clerk

Joseph Garren, Assistant Clerk

Roger Dreisbach-Williams, Recording Clerk

Sanford Segal, Reading Clerk

2010-04-01. The meeting gathered in joy and settled into worship. The Clerk welcomed the body, speaking of the mystery and grace of gathering for worship and attention to the affairs of the Yearly Meeting, and of those who cannot be present and are holding the meeting in prayer.

2010-04-02. The Clerk introduced the Friends at the clerks' table and reviewed the schedule and agenda for the sessions.

2010-04-03. The reading clerk called the roll by regions. All nine regional, quarterly and half-yearly meetings were represented.

2010-04-04. A minute of travel was returned by Newton Garver (Buffalo). The minute was endorsed by the Yearly Meeting in November 2007. Newton reported on his experience in support of the Bolivian Quaker Education Fund. He gave one example of how assistance from the Fund meant that a young woman no longer had to choose between taking the bus to school or eating lunch.

2010-04-05. The meeting received a minute of travel from Rochester Monthly Meeting, endorsed by Farmington-Scipio Regional Meeting, for their member Susan Regen to carry her concern for encouraging the practice of forgiveness. This minute was first issued in 2006 and renewed in 2008. Friends authorized the Clerk to endorse this minute of travel.

2010-04-06. The meeting received a minute of travel from Rochester Monthly Meeting, endorsed by Farmington-Scipio Regional Meeting, for their members Mary Kay Glazer and Mark Moss to carry their concern for couples enrichment work. This minute was first issued in 2002 and renewed in 2004 and in 2007. Friends authorized the Clerk to endorse this minute of travel.

2010-04-07. “Be still and cool in your own mind and spirit from your own thoughts, and you will feel the divine source of life in you turn your mind to the Lord God. And in doing this you will receive his strength and life-giving power to quieten every storm and gale that blows against you... Therefore be still for a while from your own thoughts, your own searching, seeking, desiring, imagining, and rest on the divine source of life within you so as to rest your mind on God himself and to come close to God. You will then find strength from him and find him to be a present help in time of trouble, in time of need, and to be a God at hand.” (Rex Ambler. *Truth of the Heart: An Anthology of George Fox*. London: Quaker Books, 2001, 25.) Friends heard this invitation to deeper worship.

2010-04-08. The Clerk reported on the status of work directed to the Clerk by the Yearly Meeting:

New York Yearly Meeting (NYYM) minute 2007-04-06 was distributed with a cover letter in March of this year.

As directed by NYYM minute 2009-04-04, the Clerk has met the Department of Veterans Affairs’ requirements to register as a legitimate religious organization. The registration is renewed every three years.

NYYM minute 2009-07-50 was sent as directed with a letter at the end of July.

NYYM minute 2009-11-39: The Clerk forwarded this minute in stages, beginning in late December and completed in mid-March.

NYYM minute 2009-11-36: Liaison expects to report to our session tomorrow.

The full report is attached.

2010-04-09. “Our worship is a deep exercise of our spirits before the Lord, which doth not consist in an exercising the natural part or natural mind, either to hear or speak words, or in praying according to what we, of ourselves, can apprehend or comprehend concerning our needs; but we wait, in silence of the fleshly part, to hear with the new ear what God shall please to speak inwardly in our own hearts, or outwardly through others, who speak with the new tongue which he unlooseth and teacheth to speak; and we pray in the spirit, and with the new understanding, as God pleaseth to quicken, draw forth, and open our hearts towards himself.” (Robert J. Leach, ed. *The Inward*

Journey of Isaac Penington. Wallingford PA: Pendle Hill, 1943, 26.) Friends heard an invitation to deeper worship.

2010-04-10. Jeffrey Aaron (New Brunswick), clerk of General Services Coordinating Committee, introduced the work of the section. He spoke of the possibility of hiring two consecutive temporary part-time interns to consolidate networking, coordinating and outreach among young Friends in the Yearly Meeting. This will not affect the budget. Plans are to use the Youth and Young Adults Fund, which is not a part of the budget, but is under the care of the Advancement Committee. Any questions or other input can be addressed to Christopher Sammond, general secretary; Helen Garay Toppins, associate secretary; Christine DeRoller, codirector of Powell House Youth Program; Heloise Rathbone, clerk of Personnel; Jeffrey Aaron, or any member of the Young Adult Concerns Committee. If and when the first intern comes on board, all meetings will be informed.

2010-04-11. Susan Bingham (Montclair), treasurer, presented the Treasurer's report. As of December 31, 2009, the closing balance was \$204,119, with a net change of \$115. In 2008, the net change was \$594, in 2007 \$2,914. The February 28, 2010 closing balance is \$174,972, with a net change of -\$30,939. In 2009, the net change at the same period was -\$30,723; in 2008, -\$22,821.

2010-04-12. Sandra Beer (Old Chatham), clerk of Financial Services Committee, presented the revised 2010 operating budget: income of \$520,440; expense of \$516,150. Friends spoke to possibly restoring support to other Friends' organizations and in support of representatives to these organizations should funds become available.

Friends approved the 2010 operating budget (attached).

2010-04-13. Christopher Sammond (Bulls Head-Oswego, sojourning at Poplar Ridge), general secretary, presented his report. He reminded us that we are part of a larger religious society, interconnected and interdependent. He shared numerous examples of how we support and are supported by other Friends' bodies. Many of these organizations are laying off staff and even contemplating laying themselves down. If what we have received from Friends is precious to us, we need to support it. If we truly believe that Friends' work in the world is a treasure, part of the solution to what besets this ailing world, don't we want, as Woolman said, "To turn all the treasures we possess into the channels of universal love..."?

The barriers are within. Money is not the issue. If we respond to

what we are called to do, the resources are there. The sense of scarcity is a spiritual issue. We still lack a unity of vision, a vision that individual Friends can get behind and want passionately to support. When we have that, then we will have clarity, even joyful clarity, to support that vision with all the time, talent and treasure we have at our disposal.

2010-04-14. Jill McLellan (Central Finger Lakes), co-clerk of Nominating Committee, presented the following nominations of Friends outside the Yearly Meeting for service on the Oakwood Friends School Board of Managers.

2010-04-15. Friends approved Sheila Lunger, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, for the Oakwood Friends School Board of Managers, Class of 2011.

2010-04-16. Friends approved Phillip Richmond, Baltimore Yearly Meeting, for the Oakwood Friends School Board of Managers, Class of 2011.

2010-04-17. Friends approved Ralph Skeels, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, for the Oakwood Friends School Board of Managers, Class of 2012.

2010-04-18. Friends approved the minutes for the morning session.

Attachments

General Secretary's report
Clerk's report on status of directed work
2010 operating budget

General Secretary's Report

April 2010

At Fall Sessions last year, we struggled to find clarity on how to fund the work underway at a yearly meeting level. As we did so, words like "vision," "mission," "priorities," and "support" were prevalent. We formed an ad hoc committee to look at "who we are, how we are led, and how we support the work of those leadings and needs." In the first meeting of that group, one Friend who had also served on the Ad Hoc Committee on the Function of the Yearly Meeting made

an interesting observation. She noted that while we were, ten years later, looking at some similar questions, the context was completely different. At that time, that committee was addressing concerns about how to regenerate life in the Yearly Meeting. She observed that now we have so much going on that we are struggling to prioritize and fund it. In many ways, we have succeeded ourselves into a whole different set of problems. This is actually cause for some celebration.

I saw an article the other day about the upside of a down economy being that it forces us to look at our values and our direction. I see our nation as a whole wrestling with those questions, and most non-profits looking quite hard at issues of vision and mission—who we are, what we are called to do, and how to get there. Many of our monthly meetings have been engaging those questions, and I see us as a body doing the same, pausing at a crossroads, seeking direction. We are in a new place. We have settled. We have deepened as a community. We are readying for the next chapter. How do we move into that future with conscious intention? We have been pushed to do so partly by economics. But I think we need to be doing that work regardless of economics, and I am glad we are doing it.

In the past five years, we have grown significantly in the work we are trying to support and be faithful to. As we have added new things, little by little, one at a time, it has been easy to lose track of how much has changed. As we pause at this crossroads, I think it is helpful to realize just how much we have grown. Here are just some of those new initiatives:

- YFIR—the Young Friends in Residence Program
- ARCH—Aging Resources Consultation and Help
- Significant growth in prison ministry, from supporting new prison worship groups to greater collaboration with the Alternatives to Violence Project and the American Friends Service Committee, to engaging more intentionally with the NYS Department of Correctional Services, to creating a response team to support incarcerated Friends dealing with medical crises or those who are dying
- Meetings for Discernment
- After laying down the Religious Education Committee, the Spiritual Nurture Working Group, Task Group on Youth, and then the Youth Committee and the First Day School Working Group all arose to address this crucial work.
- We have improved *Spark*, expanded and improved *InfoShare*, and constructed a new Web site.
- We have begun addressing the work of college outreach.
- We restructured the Coordinating Committee on Ministry and

Counsel, creating a more effective working body addressing the spiritual life of our community.

- We started offering programs for our youth at Spring and Fall Sessions.
- The Circle of Young Friends has become considerably more active, with greater attendance at Summer Sessions, a dynamic Young Adult Concerns Committee, and greater interest in being an integral part of the life of this Yearly Meeting.
- The Committee on Conscientious Objection to Military Taxation has been doing dynamic work.
- We created a project-based budget, enhancing understanding of how Friends' money is spent in support of the work of the Yearly Meeting.
- We completely revised the *Personnel Handbook*.
- As a body, we have engaged in significant witness against torture, war, and immoral recruitment practices.
- We totally revamped our auditing system.
- We have supported Friends' witness in Indonesia and the Republic of Georgia.
- We began having singing weekends twice a year, which have drawn Friends from across the Yearly Meeting, joining hearts as we join in song.
- The gatherings of the Friends in the Spirit of Christ group have expanded, welcoming Friends from other yearly meetings to its annual gathering.

We have added a lot. And all of these new initiatives have required varying amounts of staff time to get them up and running, and/or to provide administrative support on an ongoing basis. So we have increased program without increasing the total number of staff hours. In fact, this year we reduced the communications director position by 20%. (This was not due to the economy, but because, given other priorities for staff, I could not justify one full time equivalent [FTE] for communication in a staff of only 3.5 FTEs. I had hoped to use the savings from the reduction of the communications director position to provide much needed staff support for Young Adult Friends. Unfortunately, we had to use those savings to close the budget gap this year.)

As we as a body continue to expand program, and I believe that we will, we will need to be more and more creative with staff time. Your staff and the Communications Committee are looking at how to streamline production of *Spark*, and the new Web site should be less labor-intensive, allowing us a further reduction in the commu-

nications director position. And Helen Gary Toppins and I continue to look for ways in which volunteers can do some of the work now done by staff.

Our treasurer will be bringing us some very good news. Despite a difficult economy, we were able to close the year in the black. This was due to the staunch support of our monthly meetings and to our being extremely careful with expenses, significantly under-spending our budget. In a time when many of our monthly meetings were struggling to make budget, they chose to honor their commitment to support the Yearly Meeting. I am deeply grateful for that.

We are at a pivotal time in the Society of Friends. Many of the institutions that sustain our wider society are really struggling. Some examples: *Friends Journal* has raised serious questions about being able to continue. AFSC had to cut its budget in half last year, and laid off many staff, including closing the Syracuse office. FGC has laid off staff. Philadelphia Yearly Meeting has laid off staff. FCNL has laid off 25% of its staff. In May, Great Plains Yearly Meeting will be looking at whether or not to lay itself down. Pendle Hill is struggling. FUM, operating with a skeleton crew for several years, began a restructuring retreat last fall with the question of whether or not to lay the organization down.

If *Friends Journal* closes, it will be a loss for all of us. If FUM is laid down, we will all be the less for it. Laying down Somerset Hills is a loss for all of us. We might not feel the change, the loss, right away, but when part of what nurtures our collective life has been lost, it impacts all of us.

We are one body. Different parts nurture the whole. This is not empty rhetoric, but what I see every day. I see how Friends grow in their service to FGC, FUM, AFSC, etc, and then bring those skills back in service of their monthly meetings. I learned how to clerk by watching excellent clerking at FGC's Central Committee. At a recent retreat at Powell House, I met two women who were new to Friends. Each had come to Friends because her child had attended a Friends school, and now they are regular attenders. Some of our most active young adult Friends were nurtured by Friends high schools. The two strongest meetings in Long Island Quarter are associated with Friends Schools. Most of the Friends active in the Spiritual Nurture Working Group were nurtured by School of the Spirit. Powell House, Pendle Hill, and Earlham nurture many of our Friends, rekindling their spiritual fires, giving them much to share with their monthly, regional, and yearly meetings. I have initiated sharing some ideas on development from New England Yearly Meeting with Financial Services and a whole-meeting approach to conflict developed in Philadelphia Yearly

Meeting with our Conflict Transformation Committee. Other yearly meetings here and in Europe are taking careful note of what we are doing with Meetings for Discernment. A peace curriculum developed by Friends from Western Yearly Meeting and Northwest Yearly Meeting is going to be used in elementary and secondary schools in Kenya. We are connected.

We are all interconnected, in one Society. We advance, or we don't, as a whole. As we pause at this crossroads time, I think that part of our work will be to look at how we as individual Friends are supporting our Society as a whole. How much do we want to support that? If we really believe that Friends work in the world is a treasure, part of the solution to what besets this ailing world, don't we want, as Woolman said, "To turn all the treasures we possess into the channels of universal love..."? Most of us, myself included, are a long ways from that. I think we need to look at that, particularly now. Balancing our budget at the expense of the wider Religious Society is a short-sighted solution. If we treasure this Society, of which we have been entrusted a small part, we need to support it.

And while these are certainly hard times, and likely to get harder, I do not believe that our difficulty with budget is due to a lack of funds or a down economy. The economy has merely focused our attention on a problem we have been living with for some time. We still lack a unity of vision, a vision that individual Friends can get behind and want to passionately support. When we have that, I have no doubt about our clarity, even our joyful clarity, to support that vision with all the time, talent and treasure we have at our disposal.

I was recently talking with a Friend about the condition of our Yearly Meeting. She asked how I saw our condition. I said that I saw us at a place of decision, one where we would need to decide upon whether we would put our energies into maintaining what is, or worse yet, trying to recreate what was, or if we would be willing to step into the stream of where we are being called to. There is little life or power in maintaining; even less in recreating. If we are to be faithful, to grow, we must be willing to step into the vision that God has already prepared for us, which we have not yet seen. May we have the courage and wisdom to do so.

POST SCRIPT: Our Clerk has asked Friends who were charged with certain duties over the past five years to report back to the body on how we executed those charges. Some years ago, then Clerk Ernie Buscemi and I were charged with the task of taking the concern of Meeting the Minimum Needs of All to the wider world, Quaker and otherwise. We soon became clear that asking the two busiest Friends in the Yearly Meeting to address a task as vast as this was not a good

model to proceed from. We also felt that if the Yearly Meeting as a whole were really to engage with this work, it needed to be owned more fully in the body, supported more broadly. We suggested that Witness Coordinating Committee take this under their care, and they were clear to do so. There is a task group addressing this work under their care.

Yearly Meeting Clerk's Status Report on Directed Work

April 2010

In April 2007, the meeting directed the Clerk to forward a minute originating in Prisons Committee about revising parole policy to the New York State Council of Churches, its affiliates, the governor of New York State, and others as recommended by Prisons Committee. Due to the situation at that time in the state government and the Department of Correctional Services, Prisons Committee discerned that it was best to hold off on sending the minute. In March of this year, changes in Albany gave the committee the confidence that the time had come, and the minute was distributed as directed along with a cover letter. (NYYM minute 2007-04-06)

In April 2009, a Friend from Central Finger Lakes Meeting was minuted as feeling called to work for peace in the role of chaplain in the Veterans Administration. In endorsing her minute, the Yearly Meeting directed the Clerk to register as required with the VA that we are a "legitimate religious organization." These requirements were met in July 2009 to the satisfaction of the VA. The Clerk is in contact with the Friend, who unfortunately is having difficulties communicating with the VA. At the moment the work is not advancing as hoped. The Clerk will be mindful about ensuring that the registration is renewed in three years, as required, regardless of that Friend's status, in case this leaves way open for another Friend who feels a similar call. (NYYM minute 2009-04-04)

In July 2009, the meeting directed the Clerk and general secretary to forward a minute of concern originating in Prisons Committee about the practice of shackling incarcerated pregnant women during childbirth. The minute was sent with a letter at the end of that month to the governor of New York and the New York State Council of Churches, as directed. (NYYM minute 2009-07-50)

In November 2009, the meeting directed the Clerk to forward a minute of concern supported by Witness Coordinating Committee about accessibility to quality medical care in the U.S. to the monthly meetings and elected officials, and, with the help of the Communications Committee, to the media within the Yearly Meeting area. This

work was accomplished in stages, with the letter going to the elected officials in late December, to meetings in early January, and to the media in mid-March. (NYYM minute 2009-11-39)

Also in November of 2009, the meeting directed Liaison Committee and the general secretary to return with a proposal for a process for the Yearly Meeting to discern who we are, how we are led, and how we support the work of those leadings and needs. Liaison expects to report in our session tomorrow. (NYYM minute 2009-11-36)

Chautauqua Institution, Chautauqua, N.Y.
Sunday, April 11, 2010, 8:30 A.M.

*Heather M. Cook, Clerk
Joseph Garren, Assistant Clerk
Karen Reixach, Recording Clerk
Sanford Segal, Reading Clerk*

2010-04-19. The meeting gathered in a generous period of silent worship.

2010-04-20. After introducing the individuals at the clerks' table, the Clerk presented the consent agenda for consideration. Friends approved minutes 21–27 in accord with the consent agenda.

2010-04-21. Friends approved the nominations and received the requests for release from service. The nominations and requests for release can be found following the minutes of Spring Sessions.

2010-04-22. Friends approved a change to the Yearly Meeting *Handbook*, "Funding from Outside Sources," in the General Services section, Committee Guidelines, Section D "Financing," item 6, which will now read (change in bold):

6. The proposal developed in accordance with the guidelines above shall be considered by the appropriate section coordinating committee. It shall be considered first on its merits, then for its relationship to other funding interests of committees in the section and for the appropriateness of seeking outside funding. If the coordinating committee approves, the proposal will be presented to the General Services Coordinating Committee and the NYYM Trustees for **approval or** further seasoning on issues including, but not limited to, insurance, payroll, liability, taxes, employment status, and other possible legal issues.

The NYYM *Handbook* is available on-line at www.nyym.org or in paper copy by request to the Yearly Meeting office.

2010-04-23. Sessions Committee, General Services Coordinating Committee, and Ministry Coordinating Committee recommend a change to the *Handbook*, moving responsibility for responding to behavior concerns at Summer Sessions to Sessions Committee from Ministry Coordinating Committee. Friends approved.

2010-04-24. Friends approved Advancement Committee's recommendation for \$1,500 from the Lockport-Brinkerhoff Fund to Housatonic Monthly Meeting.

2010-04-25. Friends approved the Advancement Committee's recommendation of \$2,221.02 to Poplar Ridge Monthly Meeting from the Lockport-Brinkerhoff Fund.

2010-04-26. Friends approved the release and transfer of the current balance (approximately \$300) held in the Gospel Order Packets Fund to the Women's Fund, effective immediately.

2010-04-27. In order to support one or more named representatives to attend a special joint Friends United Meeting (FUM) General Board meeting in Kenya in July 2010, Friends approved transfer of \$500 from the "FUM Representatives to Triennial" budget line to the "FUM—Representatives to General Board" budget line.

2010-04-28. "So, Friends are not to meet like a group of people about town or parish business, either in their men's or women's meetings. They are to wait on the Lord, sensing his power and spirit to lead them and to establish an order among them that will bring credit to him. Then, what ever they do, they will be able to do it to being praise and credit to God, and they will do it together, united in faith and in the spirit, and in the fellowship made possible by the order of the gospel." (Rex Ambler. *Truth of the Heart: An Anthology of George Fox*. London: Quaker Books, 2001, 65.) Friends continued in deepening worship.

2010-04-29. John Cooley (Central Finger Lakes), clerk of Sessions Committee, indicated that these Spring Sessions are the last presently planned for Chautauqua Institution. Farmington-Scipio will continue to host Spring Sessions periodically, at a location to be determined, and could come back here someday. He reported that at this year's

Spring Sessions, 94 individuals were registered, including 3 preteens and 5 teens. Twenty-nine contributions to assist with expenses totaled \$382, and \$571 of assistance was provided to 10 individuals. Seventeen committees requested space.

2010-04-30. John described the process for developing a proposal from Sessions for a NYYM Equalization Fund. Friends approved the following proposal:

The Equalization Fund is established to help members and attenders of monthly meetings within New York Yearly Meeting attend NYYM Sessions which they would otherwise be unable to afford. Like other NYYM treasurer-managed Funds, the Equalization Fund is able to receive contributions, disburse money, and carry over balances from year-to-year. The Fund is outside the operating budget and may receive transfers from the operating budget, contributions from individuals, session registrants and other sources. It will be reported in the yearly accounting of funds, and fully audited in the usual fashion. The disbursements of scholarship or other financial assistance from the Equalization Fund will be the responsibility of Sessions Committee, which will assign a member to work with a representative of the Advancement Committee and with the NYYM Associate Secretary. They will establish guidelines for the Fund's use, and a process for receiving applications and notifying applicants of the amount of support determined. Sessions Committee will review yearly (fall or winter) the need and effectiveness of the fund, current guidelines (or proposed changes), and the need for raising additional contributions.

2010-04-31. The clerk of Sessions Committee also reported on continuing efforts to make Summer Sessions more affordable. He described a number of steps to cut costs to attenders for this coming year; this information will be printed in May *Spark*. If we meet at Silver Bay again in 2011, our schedule will be a week earlier than usual: July 17–23. If we continue using Silver Bay after 2011, Sessions has reserved dates for our preferred last week in July. The working group on site selection has limited results so far, but has not given up looking for a realistic comparison of places, conveniences and prices. They could use the help of another member on this working group.

2010-04-32. Susan Bingham reported for the Personnel Committee:

In July 2001 the final report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Function of New York Yearly Meeting made two recommendations for additions to our staff. We followed their first suggestion, which was to hire a general secretary. Their second staff recommendation was for an “Education, Youth and Outreach Secretary (or field secretary) who would have responsibility for helping monthly and regional/quarterly meetings in the areas of religious education (for both youth and adults), youth work in general, and the full range of outreach activities.”

The Yearly Meeting did not act on this recommendation at that time, but since then many Friends have recognized that we need a staff person to support young adult Friends and encourage them to stay active among us. The Personnel Committee has continued to hold this concern.

Although our staff have done some work with our young adult Friends, as their other duties have allowed, they are clear that much crucial work is not being attended to. The Personnel Committee understands the effects of the recent downturn in the economy, but is led to raise this concern. For the last few months the Personnel Committee has been working on a proposal to create a Young Adult Friends coordinator or field secretary position.

The Personnel Committee looks forward to working with all committees and Friends in the coming months to clarify this proposal. At this time they want to inform Friends that this addition to Yearly Meeting staff is being *considered*. They would like Friends to keep in mind that the need for a staff person working with Young Adults and finding the funding for it are, in some ways, separate discussions. They intend to move forward with both discussions.

If anyone wants further information or has questions or comments, please contact Susan or anyone else on the Personnel Committee.

Christopher Sammond clarified the relationship between the part-time, temporary interns (minute 2010-04-10) and the work on this staff position.

Friends were reminded of the on-going conversation about the challenges of being a geographically widespread Yearly Meeting and the possibilities for regionalizing the work of the Yearly Meeting.

2010-04-33. Friends approved the nomination of Mary Alexander (Philadelphia Yearly Meeting) to the Oakwood Friends School Board of Managers Class of 2011.

2010-04-34. “And this is my prayer, that your love may grow ever richer and richer in knowledge and insight of every kind, and may teach you by experience what things are most vital.” (Philippians 1:

9–10.) Friends silently centered in that Love in preparation for further business.

2010-04-35. The assistant clerk introduced Heather M. Cook, clerk of the Liaison Committee. Heather reported for the Liaison Charge Group, which was established at Fall 2009 Sessions, to discern “who we are, how we are led and how we support the work of those leadings and needs” (minute 2009-11-36). The Liaison Charge Group has met three times, and has co-opted individuals with particular expertise or concerns. The Group is clear that any procedure to guide the Yearly Meeting in setting priorities should be securely grounded in the constituent monthly meetings and informed by the commitment of Friends active in the Yearly Meeting structure, using existing tools such as State of Meeting, meetings for discernment, queries to worship sharing groups at Summer Sessions, and visits to monthly meetings and worship groups. The Group anticipates bringing full recommendations to Summer Sessions. She continued,

“Preliminarily, we envision a group of Friends comprising the Liaison Committee, at least one member from Financial Services, and several other at-large Friends who are familiar with the broad sweep of the Yearly Meeting. This group would take the information gleaned from monthly meetings and worship groups ... to discern and articulate priorities for our programs, which would be reflected in the budget. These priorities would then be sent to monthly meetings for threshing and seasoning before sending them on to the coordinating committees to inform those budgets, and to the staff for creating a work plan to support the priorities.

“We are clear about broad strokes of the financial aspect of this work, but not yet about particulars. The budget process and the process for setting priorities need to be separate, but we acknowledge that they interrelate and inform each other. They recognize the need to consider revising the schedule by which we create our budget so that there is more time between the formation of the proposed budget and its final approval. This would allow more time for monthly meetings to discern how much money to contribute to support the programs growing out of the concerns and leadings of our diverse community.

“We will continue to meet as needed—and as we are able!—to see how Spirit moves us as we seek to be faithful to the measure of Light we are given.”

2010-04-36. “We wait in the quietness for some centering moment that will redefine, reshape, and refocus our lives. It does seem to be a luxury to be able to give thought and time to the ups and downs of

one's private journey while the world around is so sick and weary and desperate. But, our Father, we cannot get through to the great anxieties that surround us until, somehow, a path is found through the little anxieties that beset us. Dost Thou understand what it is like to be caught between the agony of one's own private needs and to be tempest-tossed by needs that overwhelm and stagger the mind and paralyze the heart?" (Howard Thurman. *The Centering Moment* Richmond, Indiana: Friends United Press edition, 1980, 85.) Worship continued as Friends sought the Center.

2010-04-37. Frederick Dettmer (Purchase), clerk of Witness Coordinating Committee, reported on the Truth Commission on Conscience in War, held March 21 and 22 at Riverside Church in Manhattan. Fred, Ernestine Buscemi (Morningside) and Naomi Paz Greenberg (Flushing) were named as representatives of NYYM. A number of other Friends and friends of Friends participated. The public session on Sunday began with powerful testimonial presentations by veterans, who found and voiced their conscientious objection under the most trying circumstances. Fred said that he was disappointed that representatives of Jewish, Muslim and Christian groups felt they needed to justify Just War theory. J.E. McNeil, executive director of the Center on Conscience and War, reminded participants that the government seeks to dictate rights of conscience, but in fact it is the individual, not the government, that determines one's duty to his or her conscience. The journalist Christopher Hedges also spoke on the horrors of war. Fred also noted that many of the participants insisted that they were not "pacifists" even though the logic of their beliefs and stated positions indicated that they could not support any wars.

During the working session on Monday, the commissioners and those who had spoken on Sunday focused on the next steps in gaining recognition for rights of conscience, with particular attention to selective conscientious objection, especially by soldiers. April *InfoShare* contains a report on the sessions, and can be found at nyym.org/spark/is2010.4. Other information is available on the Web site conscienceinwar.org. He indicated that there are plans for an interest group and a showing of the film *Soldiers of Conscience* at Summer Sessions.

2010-04-38. Fred also updated Friends on the activities with which Witness Coordinating Committee or its constituent committees were charged by the Yearly Meeting body:

Meeting the Minimum Needs of All (minutes 2005-12-17 and 2006-04-20): Witness Coordinating Committee has taken this concern under

its care, and a task group of Witness is now addressing this work.

Death penalty (minute 2007-04-09): Thanks to the efforts of Friends and others, New Jersey has abolished the death penalty.

Committee on Conscientious Objection to Paying for War has printed and is distributing a pamphlet that includes NYYM's amicus brief from Dan Jenkins's case. (minute 2008-04-09)

Work in Sakartvelo (The Republic of Georgia): Peace Concerns coordinator Greta Mickey (Central Finger Lakes), with Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) New York staff Shirley Way (Ithaca), will be leaving in May to continue work on the meeting's behalf with Friends in the Republic of Georgia. Greta and Shirley plan to help Georgian Friends develop an AVP workshop program, and, with the assistance of a grant from the Sharing Fund, the AVP Manual is currently being translated into Georgian for this purpose.

2010-04-39. Fred reported for the Sharing Fund, and listed a number of efforts recently funded. He noted that the fundraising goal for the Sharing Fund was not met in 2009 and that Witness Coordinating Committee, with the help and generosity of NYYM Friends, will be working harder to meet the goal in 2010.

2010-04-40. The minutes of this session were approved.

2010-04-41. The meeting returned to silent worship.

2010 OPERATING BUDGET

General Services	2010 budget	2009 budget
Committee expenses		
Audit	3,050	3,050
General expense & travel	2,200	2,200
NYYM officers' expenses	2,750	2,700
Total coordinating committee expenses	8,000	7,950
Committee expenses:		
Communications Committee	23,500	23,000
Nominating Committee	350	450
Records Committee—donation	2,500	3,000
Sessions Committee	9,800	10,200
Total committee expenses	36,150	36,650
Office operations:		
Administrative expenses	13,600	14,800
Computer consultation	700	800
Office equipment	1,000	1,500
Insurance	4,800	3,700
Rent & utilities at 15th St., incl elec.	29,300	24,500
Office staff travel	8,000	9,000
Total office operations expenses	57,400	54,300
Personnel expenses:		
Hourly staff compensation	23,400	22,950
Staff employee salaries	173,390	181,900
Salary and wage-related expenses	45,025	51,625
Staff development	1,200	1,400
Volunteer support	500	500
Total personnel expenses	243,515	258,375
Bookkeeping services	31,200	31,200
Total General Services	376,265	388,475
Ministry	2010 budget	2009 budget
Committee and task group expenses:		
Advancement	3,000	7,000
Conflict Transformation Committee	700	1,250
Ministry and Pastoral Care Committee	250	250
Coordinating Comm. expense & travel	700	1,600
Spiritual Nurture Working Group	100	0
Task Group on Racism	875	0
Total committee expenses	5,625	10,100

Program expenses		
Bible study leader Summer Sessions	500	500
Provision, Meeting Visitation	100	1,000
Pastors Conference	1,250	1,500
Total program expenses	1,850	3,000
Total Ministry	7,475	13,100

Nurture	2010 budget	2009 budget
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Committees' expenses		
Committee on Aging Concerns	250	500
FWCC Committee of NYYM	100	150
Junior Yearly Meeting	21,100	23,000
Young Adult Concerns	800	1,500
Young Friends in Residence	200	
Youth Committee	200	
Total committees' expenses	22,650	25,150

YM appointees' expenses		
Quaker EarthCare Witness—rep to brd.		800
FGC Central Committee—reps to brd.	600	1,200
FUM—reps to board	3,500	3,000
Provision, FUM reps to Triennial	500	500
Provision, FWCC regional hosting expenses	0	50
Provision, FWCC—Section meetings	1,000	1,200
Provision, FWCC World Gathering (Triennial/Quadrennial)	650	900
Total YM appointees' expenses	6,250	7,650

Allocations & donations		
Friends LGBTQ Concerns	150	150
Friends General Conference (FGC)	6,800	7,000
Friends Council on Education	150	150
Friends United Meeting (FUM)	6,800	7,000
FUM—Third World attendance to Triennial	500	600
FUM Triennial—Third World Board reps	150	200
Friends World Comm. for Consultation	3,400	3,500
FWCC Section of the Americas—Third World reps	150	150
N.J. Council of Churches	0	150
N.Y. State Council of Churches	0	150
Oakwood Friends School	9,500	11,000

Powell House	65,000	65,000
Quaker Earthcare Witness	150	150
Total allocations & donations	92,750	95,200
Coordinating Comm. expense & travel	2,000	2,650
NYYM Resource Library	300	300
Total Nurture	123,950	130,950

Witness	2010 budget	2009 budget
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Committee expenses		
Barrington Dunbar	200	0
Black Concerns	200	125
COPW	125	88
Indian Affairs	350	450
Meeting the Minimum Needs of All		75
Peace Concerns coordinator	50	150
Prisons	200	125
Torture Awareness Working Group		
World Ministries	75	75
Witness Coordinating Comm. expense	535	2,662
Total committee expenses	1,735	3,750

YM appointees' expenses		
AFSC—9 representatives		
FCNL—6 representatives		
Friends Peace Teams—2 representatives		
National Campaign for Peace Tax Fund		
N.Y.S. Council of Churches		
Quaker Earthcare Witness		
William Penn House representative		
Total YM appointees' expenses	1,000	500

Donations		
Bolivian Quaker Education Fund	250	250
Friends Peace Teams	250	
National Campaign for Peace Tax Fund	250	
National Religious Campaign against Torture	125	
Rural and Migrant Ministries	1,000	
William Penn House	250	250
N.J. Council of Churches	150	
N.Y. Council of Churches	150	
Total donations	2,425	500
Sharing Fund Campaign expense	2,300	2,300
Total Witness	7,460	7,050

EXPENSES CONSOLIDATION

	2010 budget	2009 budget
General Services	376,265	388,475
Ministry	7,475	13,100
Nurture	123,950	130,950
Witness	7,460	7,050
Meeting for Discernment	1,000	1,250
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	516,150	540,825

REVENUES

Income from endowment	18,000	13,000
Other revenue	20,490	12,000
Registration fees	23,600	28,600
Income Subtotal	62,090	53,600

COVENANT DONATIONS

All Friends	59,700	59,700
Butternuts	5,600	6,500
Farmington-Scipio	67,200	68,000
Long Island	49,500	58,500
New York	68,500	77,625
Nine Partners	35,100	36,900
Northeastern	27,000	30,000
Purchase	96,250	101,000
Shrewsbury & Plainfield	49,500	49,000
Covenant subtotal	458,350	487,225
Total revenues	520,440	540,825
Total operating expenses	516,150	540,825
Expected surplus/deficit	4,290	0

MEETINGS FOR DISCERNMENT

Around 95 Friends attended the fifth NYYM Meeting for Discernment at the Purchase meetinghouse on February 20, 2010, coming from 42 monthly meetings—roughly 70% of the meetings in NYYM. Around 40% had been appointed by their monthly meetings. Friends shared and listened both as individuals and as members of their respective meetings and worship groups. Some 40% also listened from the perspective of the 57 NYYM committees on which they serve. All carried away seeds sown in their hearts and minds, which may, in time, sprout new life. In a period of afterthoughts, one seasoned Friend expressed that the February Meeting for Discernment had been a wonderful opportunity to gather as a yearly meeting body for the cost of gas and \$10. We so rarely come together to share in worship, apart from sessions, which are full of committee meetings and business agendas.

Some 15 Friends served as elders for the February Meeting for Discernment at the invitation of the Steering Committee. These Friends were joined by others in the room and from afar, and helped ground and hold the body in prayer, in the Light, and open to the loving presence of the Divine. Five Friends served as recorders. From their notes, the steering committee compiled a lengthy account of the day, which was circulated to those appointed to and in attendance at the Meeting for Discernment and to monthly meeting clerks. This was later posted on the NYYM Web site.

Many have expressed the sense that the Meetings for Discernment at Silver Bay have had a profound impact on the process of business during the rest of the week. We on the steering committee sense that the Meetings for Discernment have helped us listen more openly to those with whom we disagree, and to do so without becoming defensive. The NYYM Meetings for Discernment, as well as our other times of deep listening and sharing, have helped those able to attend come to know and embrace the particularities of individuals and individual meetings, and also the commonalities, rhythms, and harmonies in our collective lives. Along with a greater sense of wholeness, we are also aware of the holes—the absence of NYYM Friends who have not been well represented at Meetings for Discernment so far: youth, young adults, Friends from pastoral meetings, Friends of color, Friends from different class and ethnic backgrounds, and others whom we may be walling off due to ignorance, unexamined prejudice, or fear.

We have not yet heard a clear call to action arising from the Meetings for Discernment, and some find this disappointing. It is the sense of the steering committee that we are building a common base of shared understanding and experience, from which we may, in the future, be

able to do corporate discernment around issues arising from within monthly meetings and the body of the yearly meeting. For now, the yearly meeting is still growing into a sense of what it means to be a “we,” a whole-yearly-meeting-we, not simply a collection of individuals and individual meetings within a set geographic boundary, each “doing our own thing.”

The sixth NYYM Meeting for Discernment will be held in the morning and afternoon of Tuesday, July 20, at Silver Bay. The steering committee will bring a recommendation concerning the future of the Meetings for Discernment to NYYM later at Summer Sessions.

*Janet Hough, clerk
Steering Committee for Meetings for Discernment*

Ministry Coordinating Committee

The Ministry Coordinating Committee (MCC) provides administrative support and care to our constituent committees and task groups: Advancement; Committee on Conflict Transformation; Committee to Revise *Faith & Practice*; Committee on Sufferings; Worship at YM Sessions; State of the Society; Ministry and Pastoral Care; and the task groups on Ending Racism in New York Yearly Meeting and Spiritual Nurture.

The committees and task groups under our care do the hard work of providing pastoral care and safeguarding the spiritual life of our monthly and quarterly/regional meetings, and most of the activity under the care of MCC will be found in their reports. This year we asked them to cut their budgets, and they did so.

MCC met twice this year, at Fall Sessions and once during the spring. Our committees and task groups send representatives to Ministry Coordinating Committee, and we have several at-large members. This year, we provided some guidance for the development of the brand-new NYYM Web site, which looks great and was well worth all the effort.

Julia Giordano, clerk

STATE OF THE SOCIETY REPORT 2009

Summary of Monthly Meeting Reports

Friends throughout New York Yearly Meeting expressed their love this year for the Light that shines at the center of each monthly meeting. We praise and celebrate that Light, facing each other in worship and praying always that the community that embraces us be enfolded in the profound reality of God's tender embrace.

As we examine the state of our meetings and of our society, we seek to come together as one body attuned and ever faithful to the will of the Divine. In opening our hearts to truly seeing "what is" and what we are being called to, we acknowledge our limitations in perception and understanding. We need each other to see the whole and to discern God's will.

We know that we are blessed and accompanied on our journey. Yet as human beings and realists we worry about our worship communities. We worry about resources—money and time—and whether we will have enough. We struggle to meet our budgets, striving to keep our expenses down while remaining faithful to our leadings. In many meetings, we see our numbers becoming smaller, our members older, our children fewer.

We hope that others will find us just as so many of us found the Religious Society of Friends—by following a deep yearning for a form of worship that speaks to our hearts. We do not insist that our form of worship is right for everyone, so we are shy about urging others to follow us. We have trouble talking openly about spiritual matters even with each other; how can we impose on outsiders?

When new people come to meeting, the ones who stay tend to be similar to the people who are already there. This is not surprising—like calls to like—but throughout the Yearly Meeting, the idea that we appeal to only one segment of the population is unacceptable. As members of one human family created by Divine Love, we stand ready to welcome anyone who comes to us. Yet most of us find ourselves sitting with white, older, well-educated people who grew up in the middle class. We pray for an opening in the invisible walls of automatic privilege.

These concerns prompted the queries sent out for consideration in writing the State of the Meeting reports. We asked three specific questions concerning meeting finances, ministry to youth, and our experiences with racial issues. We also asked a general question about how we see the Divine Presence shaping our meetings and what the best future could bring. The resulting State of the Meeting reports

are gathered into the State of Society Report, where we consider the spiritual vitality of New York Yearly Meeting.

Finances

The most concrete query was about meeting finances. Most meetings reported that times are tough, but they are making their budgets with a few cutbacks. Meetings without meetinghouses were uniformly in good financial shape, as were those that had a source of income other than contributions—such as rental space, an annual fair, a substantial endowment. Those with heritage meetinghouses to maintain were struggling but generally not in crisis. Overall, prudence and economy have served us well.

A few reports directly addressed the added question of whether their members and attenders feel committed to contribute. Money is hard to talk about, and the need for financial planning can clash painfully with the values of acceptance and privacy. One meeting expressed concern about how a few contributors seemed to carry most of the budget; another meeting has begun to ask for quarterly pledges; yet another struggles to decide whether they should openly discuss the range in size of donations. Meetings with large endowments felt more secure, but asked themselves if their security came at the expense of growth. Is abundance best enjoyed in guarding the nest egg, or in spending it as an act of faith in responding to God's call?

Youth

The most poignant answers came from the query about ministry to youth. With some very bright exceptions, many of our meetings have either no First Day school or a variable population of fewer than five children. Every meeting in this situation expressed sorrow. The “exception” meetings had many children, many projects, and great pleasure in the sound of young voices during and after meeting for worship. Two meetings reported healthy class sizes in the elementary and middle school ages, but no teenagers. Those meetings with no young children but a few teens watch with concern as the teens leave for college. One report wondered if “by the teen years Quaker social values have been learned, but perhaps not the value of worship and the nurture of one's spirit.” On the other hand, the Young Friends in Residence program is greeted happily by every meeting involved.

Meetings report very modest outreach to colleges, even though several meet on college campuses. Two meetings have an active campus ministry, and a few others were in the beginning stages of considering how to approach students. One meeting noted that college is not available to everyone and wondered how to reach out to youth who begin work after high school.

Friends treasure their children. Even in meetings where no child is heard, there are teachers ready every First Day in case one shows up. We know that an active First Day school is critical to bringing in young families. This is an area of concern.

Race

The query about each meeting's experience with race was difficult. A few meetings chose not to respond, saying that the issue was not relevant to them or that they were located in a racially homogeneous area. Some skipped the question, while others listed each instance of a person of color joining or attending. Some mentioned the Underground Railroad History Project; others mentioned their sponsorship of prison meetings, where the diversity of color and situation is profound. Many reported that they formed discussion groups to read *Fit for Freedom, Not for Friendship* by Vanessa Julye and Donna McDaniel.

Although welcome variations are beginning to appear, the Yearly Meeting remains fairly homogeneous. Different locations face different challenges in becoming more diverse. Many meetings are located in mostly white suburbs but have members who commute to work in more urban, diverse communities. Some meetings are entirely rural; others are in the heart of multiethnic cities. Some meetings have become aware of large nearby immigrant communities. On the strategy of bringing the meeting to the people, two mostly white suburban meetings in New Jersey are working together to start a worship group in a more diverse community located between them. Similarly, some meetings near colleges are considering holding midweek meetings in the evening, when it is easier for college students to attend. If potential new members cannot find us inside our comfort zone, maybe we can venture out to find them.

What Do We Hope To Be?

Of the queries we asked, Friends responded least to the question, "What is the most hopeful vision of your meeting?" This seemed to be the case whether a meeting was large and flourishing or small and struggling. Perhaps it is hard to find the energy to envision the future. Or perhaps the invitation to dream and to listen acutely to where we are being led as a meeting opens up too much, sending us into uncharted territory beyond where we normally go in assessing the state of our society.

Intimations of such a vision named more children, youth and young adults as part of our meetings, efforts at advancement, growth in numbers and in spiritual depth, and deeper engagement in our witness to the world. Friends envisioned greater diversity of all kinds in our meetings, more connection to other meetings and the wider Society

of Friends, and a passion and vitality that encompasses worship, community, outreach and political activism.

As we strive to remain open and faithful to growing in the Light, there remains in every meeting the sweetness of the dream of love, the circle that hums with its own holy energy. “We have something very precious here,” writes one meeting. “Our meeting is small but vibrant,” says another. “We [hear] the longing for a community that brings out the best in each of us, for a welcoming, vibrant spiritual center.” “We are feeling the Spirit moving in our community. We are drawing others to us.” “We sense a yearning in the world today which Quakerism can help fulfill.”

We honor and value the treasure we have found, faithfully meeting each First Day, striving to be wise stewards of our resources and to live love actively amongst ourselves and beyond the meeting room. We enjoy the quiet that allows the Light to shine through without interference. Yet we discover again and again that it is not quiet but adversity that stimulates life. Very few meetings speak with the passion and excitement of the prison worship groups, where quiet is rare and adversity the daily fare. And more than one meeting has thanked God for the gift of an activating concern that impelled the meeting to undertake a process of discernment together. It may be the decision to build or renovate or move, or the “dragon” of theological differences, or even the heartbreaking loss of a key member. It is not our safety, but our problems that will save us.

It was said in the Spring Meeting for Discernment that we do not worship silence or buildings, but that both can be the occasion for the Spirit’s kindling. So can the challenges we face and have faced for a long time: maintaining healthy finances, reaching out to young families and children, and opening our worship to those who live in a history we have not shared. The steps we take may seem small, but every challenge that disturbs our comfort opens us to growth. We thank God for our challenges and our growth, and for continued blessings as we journey on.

Spiritual Nurture Working Group

The Spiritual Nurture Working Group is called to encourage F/friends’ growth in love and F/friends’ deepening in their direct experience of the Divine. The Spiritual Nurture Working Group continues to find life in its mission.

We understand the work of the working group to be:

- to discern needs for spiritual growth, support and accountability within New York Yearly Meeting and to respond with opportunities for spiritual formation, nurture and connection;
- to foster the recognition of gifts of the Spirit at work in our meeting communities, and to support and nurture individuals and their meetings in the development and faithful use of those gifts;
- to respond to F/friends' needs for spiritual nurture at all stages of their spiritual journeys.

We seek to be faithful to this work through working with individuals, worship groups, monthly meetings, quarterly/regional/half-yearly meetings, and the yearly meeting as a whole.

This year, the work of the Spiritual Nurture Working Group has focused on planning and implementing Feeding the Fire: Growing in Relationship to God. This is a series of eight retreats held over two years. The topics include Yearning for God, Faithfulness, Living a Life of Prayer, Different Ways In, The Individual in Community, Trusting in the Slow Work of God, Living in the Power, and Spreading the Fire. We also held an interest group at Summer Sessions.

Meetings of the Spiritual Nurture Working Group are open to all who share a concern for the work of spiritual nurture and formation. We meet at least twice a year, and as the work requires. We will meet next at Summer Sessions. At least one meeting is a retreat to renew ourselves and plan for our work. Friends interested in the work are invited to contact coclerks Lu Harper or Anne Pomeroy for more information.

Lu Harper and Anne Pomeroy, coclerks

Task Group on Racism in New York Yearly Meeting

This past year the Task Group on Racism in New York Yearly Meeting continued its work of finding ways to support Friends in addressing issues of racism in our meetings. We were encouraged by the increased responses to this issue at both the local and yearly meeting levels and continued to encourage Friends to make use of the materials for addressing racism that we sent out in the past.

At yearly meeting sessions in 2009, we planned and sponsored a Meeting for Worship for Racial Healing under the care of Ministry Coordinating Committee. This was a well attended evening program at which many Friends shared their concerns and leadings on issues

of racism and related topics. It was clearly a step forward in our work of “Becoming Whole.” The Task Group also sponsored a Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Racial Healing after lunch one day for anyone who felt called to continue this work. We hope to provide this opportunity at yearly meeting sessions on a regular basis. We also led an interest group and showed the video *Mirrors of Privilege* followed by a discussion. The interest group was well attended with many Friends responding to issues raised by the video.

We were greatly encouraged by the Yearly Meeting’s action at Summer Sessions in passing a minute on Race and Racism. Throughout the process many Friends were engaged in making this happen. The minute grew out of a concern in Rahway-Plainfield Monthly Meeting, was affirmed by Shrewsbury & Plainfield Half-Yearly Meeting, revised and approved by Ministry Coordinating Committee, and approved by Yearly Meeting. Through each step of the process, Friends were engaged in addressing the issue of racism and finding words to voice what holds true for us at this time. Although this was not the direct work of the Task Group, we trust that the work Friends are doing on issues of racism that we are supporting helped make this possible.

Another indication of our movement forward as a yearly meeting in looking at issues of racism in the Yearly Meeting was the inclusion of the first query for the State of Society reports, which dealt with the issue of racism and how Friends are responding to the “Seed Cracked Open.” The Task Group is looking forward to reading the responses, finding ways to support work that is happening, encouraging work that is beginning, and providing resources for Friends who are still looking at the “Seed.” It is clear from the fact that many meetings chose not to respond to the query that we still have work to do.

This year the Task Group spent some time reexamining our “task” and what we are called to do. We looked at ways we can better promote our message, what has worked and what hasn’t, and what our goals are. We also began looking more deeply at our own racism, listening to Friends of Color in the group to get a better understanding of issues they face, and learning more about the effects of institutionalized racism in NYYM and how to change it. It became clear to us in this process that we cannot ask Friends to take on work we are not doing ourselves. We are all in this together.

Irma Guthrie, clerk

Advancement Committee

The New York Yearly Meeting Advancement Committee is seeking guidance in discerning the best way forward toward fulfilling its essential missions. The Yearly Meeting *Handbook* charges the committee to “disseminate widely an awareness of the faith, practice, and testimonies of Friends” and “to reach out to seekers.” Among its other responsibilities, this call to outreach will be a principal focus of the committee in the year ahead.

It is clear from our committee meetings and from the State of Meeting reports received in recent years that, while our faith and worship are vital and spirit centered, many monthly meetings in our Yearly Meeting are small, aging, struggling, and nearly invisible in their own communities. This reality should be a concern to all Yearly Meeting Friends.

The Advancement Committee will labor to develop a program of regional advancement gatherings to assist meetings in the development and expansion of community and regional advancement efforts. It is clear that to develop such a program and to fulfill its other responsibilities, the committee will need to expand its present membership. The committee seeks Friends from around the Yearly Meeting who feel called to the ministry of advancement work. If so led, Friends are asked to contact the Yearly Meeting Nominating Committee or the clerks of the Advancement Committee for further discernment.

Nor do they light a lamp and then put it under a bushel basket; it is set on a lamp stand, where it gives light to all in the house.

– *Matthew 5:15*

Information:

- Friends should be aware of the new Yearly Meeting Web site, which they will find to be more accessible, functional and user friendly.
- Friends should be aware that the Advancement Committee has funds available for monthly meetings to use for assistance in the purchase of signage or related promotional materials, including Web site development.
- An expansion of Quaker Quest opportunities is underway and three YM Friends are in training as facilitators for the powerful outreach vehicle. Monthly meetings are encouraged to request a visit from a Quaker Quest speaker. More info can be found at www.quakerquest.org.

Don Badgley, clerk

Committee on Conflict Transformation

Since its reconstituted membership at Summer Sessions 2009, the Committee on Conflict Transformation has met several times by telephone and in person. The committee has engaged in a process of assessing the leadings of the group with respect to the value it hoped to offer, both to the constituent monthly and regional meetings, and to individual Friends. Through prayer and consultation, the members of the committee shared their training, experiences, and leadings in conflict resolution and transformation, and created a guidance document, for internal use of the committee, to ensure that each member of the committee was able to respond to inquiring Friends in a uniform, consistent, and helpful manner.

Yearly Meeting Friends reached out to the committee only a few times during the period following July 2009. The committee is concerned that Friends understand the resources that it offers, and to communicate its core competencies to the Yearly Meeting. Additionally, the committee hopes that its expertise will not simply be brought to bear in times of immediate need, but also be used to inculcate conflict avoidance skills within monthly meetings in order that they might meet the challenges of internal conflicts with grace and confidence.

After prayerful consideration, the committee adopted this statement as the basis for its communication efforts:

The Committee on Conflict Transformation serves the monthly meetings in New York Yearly Meeting, and the Yearly Meeting itself when it convenes in Sessions. Our objective is, when invited, to assist meetings in situations of disabling conflict and to help transform those situations into opportunities for spiritual growth, both for the individuals involved and for their meetings. This can be accomplished either by timely intercession in response to a crisis, or by helping the engaging group to build skills in avoiding debilitating conflict.

The committee includes Friends who are experienced and skilled as active listeners, problem-solvers and mediators. We provide an opportunity for troubled Friends to be heard with empathy in the assurance of a safe environment. We endeavor to help Friends consider their situations in new ways that allow for constructive and positive transformation, and test whether a way forward might be found, beyond the conflict that the individual or the meeting may be experiencing.

We invite all Friends, whether in a corporate or an individual capacity, to think of the Committee on Conflict

Transformation when confronted with two types of challenges: First, consider us as “First Responders” to a crisis; and second, as a resource to train the meeting in the skills of conflict acknowledgment, understanding, and prevention.

This statement was posted on the Yearly Meeting Web site and a hard-copy pamphlet was planned. Other material on the Web site concerning the committee was discarded in the hope of making the committee’s resources clearer to those seeking them. In addition, the committee undertook to contact several monthly meetings to alert them to the committee’s expertise and offer its services.

The committee hopes that, through these efforts and others in the coming year, it can increase the frequency of Friends’ making practical use of its services.

Peter Phillips, clerk

Epistle Committee

This past year we prepared the outgoing Epistle from New York Yearly Meeting to Friends everywhere.

The task of the committee is to prepare the outgoing Epistle. The work is done during Summer Sessions, beginning on the third day and focusing on the fourth and fifth days, when the Epistle is prepared, presented and approved. Those on the committee should enjoy the process of corporate composition and have gifts for discerning the state of the meeting and putting it into a few well seasoned words. Patience and humility are also required, but the joy and spiritual intensity of the work, and the satisfaction of accomplishment, are ample rewards.

Roger Dreisbach-Williams, clerk

Ministry and Pastoral Care Committee

The Ministry and Pastoral Care Committee (MPC) benefited from having its full membership of six Friends this year. We met three times as a full committee (September, February, and June) and for planning at Fall Sessions. In addition, MPC sponsored discussion groups for Friends involved with Ministry and Counsel, Ministry and Oversight, and Pastoral Care committees at the monthly and regional meeting level. These sessions, along with themes that arose from Meetings for Discernment and State of the Meeting Reports, helped MPC to

identify several topics we wish to address, among them: pastoral care training, activities to help regional ministry and counsel committees support monthly meetings, focus on intra-committee work to deepen and ground Friends' experience serving on Ministry and Counsel, and practical support for ministry and counsel work in small meetings.

Building on a concern that many Ministry and Counsel Committees are struggling with their role and how to be more grounded and effective in this busy society in which we live, MPC has worked this year to develop a traveling "Ministry and Counsel Workshop" that can be tailored to the needs of monthly or regional meetings, in sessions two hours long to full day. Our first workshop was held at Butternuts Quarterly Meeting in May.

Ministry and Pastoral Care began this year to focus on how the gifts of the programmed and unprogrammed meeting traditions in our yearly meeting can support each other. MPC hopes to find ways to support Young Friends with emerging callings to pastoral ministry. We financially support the Pastors and Elders Retreats held twice yearly, once with New England Yearly Meeting.

MPC is the parent committee for the Traveling Friends Advisory Group (*see* TFAG advance report), makes recommendations for Traveling Friends' contacts with monthly meetings and receives their reports about visits and needs throughout the Yearly Meeting. MPC is responsible for making recommendations each year to the Ministry Coordinating Committee for the use of the Stevens Fund interest, for financial support of "superannuated" ministers and yearly meeting workers and spouses. The Yearly Meeting prayer list is also our responsibility and we have worked with our new coordinator to increase the Yearly Meeting's awareness of the list and to make clear the appropriate parameters for its use.

Our committee meetings have been supported by a sense of gathered worship and spirit-led discussion. We continue to work to define and refine our role in the Yearly Meeting.

Rachel V. Ruth, clerk

Committee to Revise *Faith and Practice*

No report submitted.

State of the Society Committee

No report submitted.

Committee on Sufferings

The Committee on Sufferings has had no requests for assistance in the past year.

The charge of the committee is to provide assistance to those who are suffering because of Friends testimonies. This charge traces its history back to the earliest Friends.

Members and attenders of NYYM may apply for financial assistance. The request should be related to a testimony and should be seasoned by a Quaker body such as the monthly meeting, quarterly meeting or Yearly Meeting.

Examples of where the committee can provide partial financial assistance are:

- Aid to a student denied financial aid because of resistance to signing a military statement
- Legal costs for nonviolent resistance
- Legal costs for war tax resistance
- Emergency needs while on a Quaker mission
- Assistance to those who suffer economic loss, such as the loss of a job, because of work in peace activities
- Assistance to those who suffer economic loss, such as the loss of a job, because of racial, sexual or age-related harassment.

To apply for assistance, send an e-mail or letter, or call the Yearly Meeting office. The request should include the following:

- What is the related Friends' testimony?
- What is the total financial burden?
 - How much is covered by applicant?
 - How much by other sources?
 - Requested amount from the committee
- Name of supporting Quaker body: monthly meeting, quarterly meeting, Yearly Meeting

The Yearly Meeting office will contact the committee clerk or other committee members, who will respond directly to the applicant.

The committee met at Silver Bay in 2009 and used e-mail to communicate with each other during the year. A new *Handbook* page was also written.

Annie Geiger, clerk

Traveling Friends Advisory Group

This year the Traveling Friends Advisory Group (TFAG) finished a year-long effort to finalize its working documents, including an internal handbook page for the Ministry Coordinating Committee and a Traveling Friends Responsibilities document. These were presented to and approved by the Ministry Coordinating Committee as “working documents” for the next two years, after which comments will be solicited and changes considered for ways to improve the program. Currently TFAG is exploring ways to give Traveling Friends ongoing and meaningful encouragement, training, and feedback, as well as ways to involve more Friends in meeting visitation and how more meetings can be visited.

Traveling Friends have not been as active this year, with approximately 12 visits made. Visitation on request from meetings by Traveling Friends and elders continues in support of two meetings that needed pastoral and pulpit supply in times of transition, as well as visits under the care of the Long Island Quarterly Meeting inter-visitation initiative. Other meetings have benefited from the parallel work of the general secretary who frequently visits monthly meetings, often with an elder, in order to offer support, assistance, and encouragement.

The work of the Traveling Friends is a program to support Friends visiting meetings—especially smaller meetings—on behalf of NYYM, with the expectation that connections will be made and/or strengthened. Friends travel at the urging of the Spirit within. They are led to travel. And this leading is tested and accepted in a process that has been carefully developed. We want to encourage everyone to test this as a possible avenue for service/advancement. The NYYM Visitation Fund supports the work of Traveling Friends by providing for stipends and travel expenses. An annual budget line in the Ministry Coordinating Committee provides monies to the fund and it also receives some contributions from individuals.

Rachel V. Ruth, clerk pro tem

Committee on Worship at Yearly Meeting Sessions

At Fall and Spring Sessions, the Worship at Yearly Meeting Sessions Committee helped the regional/quarterly host committees by inviting additional elders from the wider yearly meeting body to join local Friends sitting on the facing chairs during meeting for worship and meeting for worship with attention to business, to prayerfully ground and hold the body in the Light.

At Silver Bay, the Worship at Yearly Meeting Sessions Committee helped oversee the many Summer Sessions activities under the care of the Ministry Coordinating Committee. At meetings for worship and meetings for worship with attention to business, the committee invited and coordinated Friends sitting on the facing chairs as elders. These Friends provided a prayerful presence and helped remind us that we are connected to the Divine Center. The committee helped coordinate and lent support to the varied other worship opportunities at Silver Bay, including worship sharing groups, the Healing Center, hymn singing in the Chapel, meetings for worship at the boathouse, early morning coffee, communion & conversation, as well as meetings for worship for racial healing, worship with Friends in the Spirit of Christ, and worship with Friends for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Concerns. The committee also identified two Friends to bring the message for Silver Bay's Monday and Tuesday vespers services in the Chapel.

Janet Hough, clerk

GENERAL SERVICES SECTION

General Services Coordinating Committee

The coordinating committees exist in large part to assist the committees under their charge and to review their work, in particular prior to any presentation to gathered Friends at our sessions. Details of the working of the committees follow in their individual reports. General Services Coordinating Committee met four times, as it normally does, twice at Summer Sessions, once at Fall Sessions, and once in March.

The committee is currently reviewing the structure of the General Secretary's Supervisory Task Group to determine whether it should be restructured as a regular Yearly Meeting committee. Discussions are ongoing between the two groups with additional input from Personnel Committee and the general secretary.

The Office Study Task Group is preparing a report on the possibility and desirability of relocating the Year Meeting offices out of New York City. In addition to the cost differentials among the areas under consideration, there are many additional considerations. We hope to have a report ready for Friends to consider in the near future.

The committee provided critical assistance in the process of integration of the new ARCH program (Aging Resources Consultation and Help) into the YM structures, which required the resolution of considerable legal, business, and process problems. Happily, that program, despite a complicated and difficult start, is now functioning quite successfully and providing a very valuable and highly appreciated service. The ARCH coordinators, Anita Paul and Barbara Spring, are classified as part-time employees. This arrangement provides them insurance and liability coverage. All program expenses and wages are paid by an annual grant outside the YM budget. Coordinator supervision is under both Personnel Committee and the Committee on Aging Concerns, which is under the Nurture Section. Areas of supervision and evaluation are distinct and defined.

Also this past year, the YFIR program (Young Friends in Residence) began and is functioning well. The young Friends in the YFIR program are interns. They function under the Young Friends in Residence Committee, which is also under the Nurture Section. Associated expenses are also paid by an annual grant.

In part because of the new category of employees from the ARCH program and the new YFIR interns and in part because the *Personnel Handbook* was otherwise significantly out of date, the Personnel Committee has been laboring hard to bring the *Personnel Handbook* up to date. That remains a work in progress with the assistance of GSCC

and our pro bono Quaker attorney, Brian Doherty.

Major efforts have been made to keep expenses down within the section, which is by far the largest budget of the four sections, in that it covers personnel expenses, salary, benefits, taxes, rent, insurance, office expenses, printing, bookkeeping, and Sessions expenses, as well as some regular committee line expenses. We are very pleased that we were able to exceed the commitment this past year to bring each coordinating committee 2010 budget down by 1% from what had been presented at Fall Sessions 2009, bringing the GSCC budget down by almost 2%, a reduction of over \$7,200. In addition, we have sublet a portion of the Yearly Meeting offices to Amerinda, a nonprofit Native American arts organization, which brings in addition income of several thousand dollars per year.

The committee is working with Nominating Committee to draft a set of definitions to clarify the use of co-opting and of nominations that have been made but are pending approval, and other related concerns that have never been formally addressed and defined. When ready, they will be presented to Friends for approval and insertion in the *YM Handbook*.

The committee is also working with Sessions Committee to establish a new fund specifically to assist Friends financially to attend any session of NYYM. In addition, an update and clarification of the process of review for all such applications is underway.

Jeffrey Aaron, clerk

Audit Committee

After the professional outside auditor, Bob Lee, CPA, has prepared the audit of NYYM accounts, the Audit Committee meets with the auditor, the Yearly Meeting treasurer, the NYYM staff, and clerk of General Services to review the audit results and our accounting system. All were found in order for the 2008 year.

Along with items of business, our representative to the General Services Coordinating Committee was able to participate in the review of the Yearly Meeting *Personnel Handbook*.

We mourn the death of Harold Risler, longtime member and former clerk/convener of the Audit Committee.

The 2009 audit should be available by Summer Sessions

James Wood, convener

Communications Committee

Vonn New, a member of the Communications Committee, with help from the rest of the committee and others, restructured the NYYM Web site to make it easier for non-Friends to find out about us and for members to find information quickly. NYYM committees will also have the ability to use secured portions of the Web site to conduct committee business. The committee is also looking into ways to expand the use of the Web site, particularly in including items that will be of interest to younger Friends. Because the Web site can easily deliver multimedia content (such as the Minute on Torture video), we have been discussing the possibility of including more such items on the Web site, both generated within the Yearly Meeting and possibly collated from elsewhere. Friends with suggestions in this regard are encouraged to contact the committee clerk, Adam Segal-Isaacson.

Spark continued to offer thematic issues, which have been very well received. Upcoming topics in 2010 and 2011 are Friends and Humor, Friends and Holidays, Friends and Sexuality, When Quakers Do Business, a youth-and-young-adult-oriented issue, our vision for the future of our Society, and Quaker Authors. Friends are invited to submit articles bearing on these topics, and to suggest other topics we might consider for the future. Young Friends particularly are invited to send material for the youth issue for later next year, and all other issues too. The committee is pleased to note that we have been receiving more articles than fit in *Spark* and that the additional material has been published on the Web site. Friends are encouraged to look there.

Spark has begun publishing an “Around Our Yearly Meeting” section, letting Friends know of news and events in the monthly meetings. Monthly and quarterly meetings are encouraged to send material for inclusion in *Spark*, the online newsletter *InfoShare*, and the Web site to paul@nyym.org and office@nyym.org. Friends who wish to be added to the NYYM global e-mail list may send a request to walter@nyym.org.

The committee has also been working to set up a quick-response team to write and distribute press releases on behalf of the Yearly Meeting. The clerk and the general secretary are empowered to speak between YM sessions for the Yearly Meeting, but we have no way to get this information effectively to the news media. Friends who have experience in public relations and who could assist us in setting up a process for doing this are encouraged to contact the NYYM office. The first generations of Friends were not shy about promoting their works and views, but more recently we have been more reticent. We

shouldn't hide our Light under a bushel, but make a known witness to the world.

Adam Segal-Isaacson, clerk

Financial Services Committee

In 2009 Financial Services Committee has continued the focus started in 2008 to achieve the two goals set forth last year:

- We want monthly meetings to make informed covenant donation decisions and to share their priorities for NYYM.
- We want the Yearly Meeting to frame its budget based on realistic covenant donations and priorities articulated by constituent meetings.

Throughout the fall, members of the Financial Services Committee made ourselves available to meet with constituent meetings of the Yearly Meeting. Partially because of our direct contact with so many meetings we knew many of the covenant donation amounts at the beginning of Budget Saturday. It was clear that there could not be any increase in the budget over the previous year's; if anything there would need to be a decrease.

Thirty Friends gathered at the annual Budget Saturday, to seek clarity on a final proposed budget for 2010. Messages were heard about the many ways that NYYM carries out important ministry among our meetings, in our region, and in the wider world—both among Friends and beyond. There was also a sense that meetings are stretching financially more than they have in the recent past and that funding needed to decrease from the 2008 budgeted level. Others reflected on the incredible potential for meetings, ministry, funding, and energy if we can move to a sense of opening untapped energy.

We ended Budget Saturday without a completed, balanced budget, though some work was done towards finding ways to lower expenses. There was also an exercise carried out at the meeting to test the possibility for asking for additional donations by individuals directly to NYYM in addition to asking monthly meetings to change their covenant donation to the Yearly Meeting to help fill the gap.

At Fall Sessions Financial Services proposed a budget that had a level of funding that was the committee's best sense of anticipated income. Financial Services was clear that it did not feel comfortable recommending a deficit budget, so eventually each coordinating committee was asked, and agreed, to reduce their budgets by 1%. The final

expense budget line items were approved at Spring Sessions.

Financial Services Committee asked NYYM to set up a task group to look at a better process for setting priorities across the entire organization, rather than just within each coordinating committee, in a way that can facilitate a better way of creating a budget and the focus of the Yearly Meeting. We are gratified that this work is beginning and look forward to integrating that into a renewed look at the budget process.

Sandra Beer, clerk

Committee on the Expenditure of the H.H. Mosher Fund

Last year, at our annual sessions at Silver Bay, we distributed \$4,270 in books. This included \$3,861 for gifts to 83 monthly meetings, worship groups, prison worship groups, and Friends institutions (mostly schools). We gave gift books to 17 individuals (staff, recorded ministers, presenters at NYYM, and first-time visitors at our Yearly Meeting from other yearly meetings).

Please visit the Book Table, just inside the front door to the lobby at Silver Bay, to replenish your monthly meeting's library shelves with up to \$50 worth of free books again this year. If your meeting is not sending a representative to Summer Sessions, please ask a neighboring meeting that is planning on sending a Friend, to select books totaling \$50 for your meeting as well. Everyone is invited to sign up for an hour or two to help us sell and distribute the books.

Catharine Thomas, clerk

General Secretary's Report

Years of discernment by several committees led to a series of recommendations to effect the revitalization of this Yearly Meeting. One of those recommendations was the creation of the general secretary position. Friends at that time envisioned that someone serving in this position would serve as a catalyst for that revitalization. That is in large part how I understand my work, serving as a catalyst, since the work is far greater than any one person could hope to address and is rightly the work of us all together. My work is to enlist and support others in this work, the work of fostering greater life in the Spirit throughout this Yearly Meeting. Whether at a level of monthly,

quarterly/regional/half-yearly, or yearly meeting, it is all one work, for we are all part of one Society.

A significant amount of my time goes to representing us in the wider body of Friends, to being ultimately responsible for the good functioning of our staff, and to dealing with the myriad things that come to me day to day. With the time remaining, I do what I can to help us lay the foundations for a vibrant future. That work involves doing, and supporting others in doing, the long-term work of community building, supporting the gifts of others, networking, and furthering the work that will help us to deepen in our practice as Friends.

Visiting monthly meetings and worship groups is a very important part of this work. What I do when I visit varies enormously. Frequently I engage in active listening sessions about the life of a given community. Sometimes I am asked to help with internal conflicts, sometimes to lead workshops and retreats to help a community deepen, sometimes to help Friends better understand the work going on at a yearly meeting level. Often I am able to connect individuals or the group with resources at a quarterly/regional/half-yearly level, at a yearly meeting level, or within the wider Society. Visitation, and the networking it allows, remains the favorite part of my work.

I also make myself available on an ongoing basis, as requested, in supporting meeting clerks, Ministry and Counsel clerks, pastors, and others in addressing problems in their communities. These problems can range from how to handle difficult individuals to financial questions to advancement to questions of faith and practice.

In this past year I did not manage to make as many visits as I would have liked. While being quite sick with Lyme Disease for an extended period did not help any, the larger reason is that I was pulled in too many directions. I have already shifted my priorities some to allow more time for visitation, and I have been working with the General Secretary's Supervisory Task Group to further reassess the priorities for my work.

I welcome invitations to come visit monthly meetings and worship groups, whether to just come to be with you or to address particular issues. I carry a particular concern about helping Friends to deepen in our worship life, and am open to give workshops and retreats on that topic.

In this past year I spent a lot of time with some of our young adult Friends, listening to them talk about their spiritual lives and their sense of how they fit into our community, attending several of their retreats, and leading one retreat for them. Out of those experiences, and in conjunction with the Young Adult Concerns Committee, I worked to design a staff position to address their particular needs. Our Personnel

Committee is in the process of refining this further, and hopes to bring it to General Services this summer.

Tending to this part of our community is important work. Our young adult Friends are indeed a large part of the foundation for our future. We need to do better in caring for this part of our community, and Helen and I do not have the extra time to do so, without neglecting some of our other duties.

I supported the work of the Spiritual Nurture Working Group this past year, especially helping plan the series of retreats that will extend over a two-year period entitled “Feeding the Fire: Growing in Relationship with God.” This series is intended to pick up where the “Drawing Out Gifts” series of a number of years ago left off, supporting individuals in their spiritual growth so that they can better share their gifts at all levels of our Society.

Our Meetings for Discernment have also required a lot of my time as I have supported the work of the Meeting for Discernment Steering Committee, on which I serve ex-officio. Much planning and care goes into those days of Friends’ gathering from across the Yearly Meeting to listen to each other and the Spirit. I see those meetings as helping us to grow in our capacity for corporate discernment. Over time, this should serve us well as we grapple with difficult issues, and learn to do so in a way where we grow in community and in the Spirit.

I also organized and attended the two Nightingales Singing Weekends and one of the two NYYM/NEYM pastors’ retreats, and helped organize the multi-YM Christ-centered gathering, the “Whole Meetings” multigenerational retreat, and this year’s Superintendents and Secretary’s Retreat, all of which were at Powell House. I also helped organize, in collaboration with our clerk, the third consultation on how we support our children, youth, and young adults.

The Nightingales weekends tend to draw Friends from six or seven of our nine regions, building community locally and Yearly Meeting-wide. The pastors’ retreats nurture the nurturers of our pastoral meetings. The Christ-centered Friends gathering nurtures Friends who have felt alienated and marginalized in our Yearly Meeting. The Whole Meetings retreat and the consultations have sought to help us to find ways to become more of one community across the spectrum of age, a vital concern as we are not retaining many of our youngest members.

Most recently, I have been asked by the new clerk of the Advancement Committee to help revitalize the work of that committee. I am glad to do so, as that committee’s work is very important to our growth and future. I also serve on the Traveling Friends Advisory Group, and have agreed to lead that group’s effort to get that program up and run-

ning again. Our practice of Friends traveling is a vital part of how we are knit together into one body, and the more Friends we have visiting meetings, particularly our smallest meetings, the better.

Additionally, I have worked extensively with our Communications Committee as it has birthed our new Web site, a very important tool for advancement. I have also put in lots of time supporting the clerk of Financial Services in a very difficult budget year, and worked with the Liaison Committee/ad hoc group addressing how our budget may better reflect the priorities of the whole Yearly Meeting. I also worked with our Personnel Committee in the total revamping of our *Personnel Handbook*, which was so out of date as to no longer be a useful guide for managing our staff.

There is a lot going on in this Yearly Meeting at this time. Much of it is laying a good groundwork for the future. I feel good about what we have accomplished thus far, and good about the work I am doing.

Christopher Sammond

Nominating Committee

The nominating process starts in regional, half-yearly, and quarterly meetings where representatives are appointed proportionate to membership (e.g., the allotment for Butternuts Quarter, which is small, is one representative, and for Farmington-Scipio region, it is five). Our year began with a mailing of information about nominating process and committees and a plea to regional clerks to appoint new members from regions that were under-represented. We received some positive response, but the fact that six out of nine regions are down by one to three possible appointees means the appeal for full representation is still a priority. The business of Nominating Committee is looking for gifts and matching those gifts with opportunities for service. Discernment in bringing forth names for appointment at any yearly meeting session includes worshipful response to questions raised in response to postings on the consent agenda.

The committee has been using phone calls, e-mail, and letters to contact potential nominees. All of the paper letters inviting Friends to serve, thanking them for service and updated contact information for nominees, have been converted to electronic format. Nominating committee members are using whatever method works best for them to solicit nominees with particular gifts. We are working on updating the *Handbook* and having the information regarding nominating committee not only current but also in agreement with the information

in *Faith and Practice*. Another goal is written clarification of terms such as “co-opting” when someone is listed as on a committee before being approved by the body, as well as other irregular appointments. Normally one must be a member of a monthly meeting in NYYM but some appointments are made of Friends in other yearly meetings.

We have been asked to find more youth and young adults to serve on the various committees and as representatives. This is a worthy goal but not without challenges. Many young people are not yet full members of a monthly meeting, which is a requirement for nomination to most committees, and logistics such as attending college out of the area may prevent regular attendance at the Yearly Meeting sessions. Some appointments do not require regular meetings, and many committees use e-mail and conference calls for some of their work. We encourage all to consider service on a committee, and if you have interest but have not been asked, please approach a member of the committee to ask about service.

Deborah Dickinson & Jill McLellan, coclerks

Personnel Committee

The Personnel Committee witnesses the conscientious efforts of our staff, Paul Busby, Walter Naegle, Christopher Sammond, and Helen Garay Toppins, to complete the necessary work of the Yearly Meeting with good spirit.

We review staff evaluations, and again the reality is that the staff has more work than they can do during the regular work week. They usually have some volunteer assistance with some of their tasks. The communications director has recovered from surgery, but during the time he was recuperating the rest of the staff filled in for him to make sure his work was done, along with a substantial group of volunteers. We are grateful for all their extra work.

We have seen that members of New York Yearly Meeting are more and more active each year. This is great, but it leads to more work in the office. While the staff continues to work as efficiently as they can, we would hire more staff if we had sufficient funds and Friends were supportive. We have been working on a job description for a staff position that would support young adult Friends in this yearly meeting. We will be looking for ways of funding this position in the coming year.

The committee strives to keep our costs down, especially given the economic challenges. Staff salaries have not been raised, some of the

benefits have been reduced, and the communications director is now working 80% of a regular week's work.

We have a newly revised and updated *Personnel Handbook* that has been approved as a working document by General Services Coordinating Committee. It is now substantially complete and reflects our current practice. In this process we have had advice from many people including some lawyers. We will continue to work on the *Handbook* in the coming year.

Our committee now has four appointed members, out of a possible six members. Jeffrey Aaron, clerk of General Services, regularly attends our meetings, but we would like to fill our complement of six members for our committee.

Heloise Rathbone, clerk

Yearly Meeting Staff

Paul Busby, communications director

Paul's report was not available at press time due to his extended sick leave.

Walter Naegle, administrative assistant

My main tasks at the NYYM office revolve around maintaining the membership records in both paper and electronic formats. With the assistance of the monthly meeting recorders I try to keep accurate membership lists, adding new members, removing members who have transferred out of NYYM, died, or resigned their membership. Some of this information is published in our newspaper, *Spark*, and a statistical report on membership is part of the NYYM *Yearbook*. The database provides the information I need to coordinate the committee section of the *Yearbook* and the alphabetical index of Friends under appointment. In addition to membership records, monthly meetings provide a yearly information sheet listing clerks, treasurers, recorders, and other appointees for their meeting. With this information entered into the database, we can easily do paper or electronic mailings to specific groups. The database also contains lists of national and international Quaker organizations with which NYYM is associated, as well as lists of political representatives to whom we sometimes address our concerns.

I also use the database program to process registrations for Fall,

Spring, and Summer Sessions, as well as other events such as the Pastor's Retreat, the Nightingales singing weekends, and the Meetings for Discernment.

I work closely with my colleague, Helen Garay Toppins, to prepare payment vouchers and to record and make bank deposits for both the Operating and Sharing Fund accounts. I prepare the Sharing Fund letters that are used by contributors for tax deductions, and review bank statements. I send out financial reports monthly to both monthly meeting and quarterly/regional treasurers.

I continue to help research photos and illustrations for use in *Spark*.

Periodically I am called upon to work on special projects. A few of those during the past year have been

- Coordinating delivery of a message of concern about our government's policy on healthcare to meetings and elected officials
- Organizing a mailing to N.Y. State officials on our Minute on Parole
- Compiling the YM Advancement contact list
- Sending Peace and Social Action surveys to monthly meetings and worship groups

Routine tasks include answering the telephone, checking and responding to e-mails, opening and distributing mail, ordering office supplies, and shipping via UPS.

Helen Garay Toppins, associate secretary

This is a job that I truly love. It's hard to comprehend that I have been a New York Yearly Meeting staffer for almost two decades. It seems like just yesterday that I walked through the door. The typewriters may have been replaced by computers and the phone calls by e-mail, but the love and support of Friends remains rock steady. And the collegial support that I get from the NYYM staff and our publications typesetter is priceless.

The days whizz by. Training at Powell House in how to make Quaker meetings family friendly; Quaker Quest training at Pendle Hill; advancement consultation in Poughkeepsie; worshipping behind prison walls at Attica, Auburn, and Woodbourne; providing staff support for the Sessions and Communications Committees and the College Outreach Working Group; helping to design a NYYM Young Adult Internship program; working on *Spark* and the *Yearbook*; meetings with First Day school teachers in New York City; Fall Sessions in New Jersey; Spring Sessions at Chautauqua; Summer Sessions at

Silver Bay. All of this interspersed with full time administrative and supervisory duties at the NYYM office.

It's a job that can be hectic and stressful, so having a spiritual place wherein one can recharge and be renewed is crucial. That place for me is my meeting for worship—Morningside Meeting. It continues to serve as a touchstone for my Yearly Meeting work. It is that welcoming spiritual community that I keep going back to again and again for grounding.

Records Committee

The committee continues to work on revising the Records Guidelines and our *Handbook* pages. We are looking for a balance that provides for the protection of the records and yet does not overwhelm the recipients of the records at Friends Historical Library. Electronic records continue to be an issue, and we continue to ask that Friends maintain electronic formats as they are able to do so. This will be a major focus of the committee as we move forward.

This year has also had a considerable discussion with Friends Historical Library about the digitization of our historic records. Questions about who makes the decisions about our records and what types of access would be provided were reviewed. At this time, our records are not in a major digitization project. Requests to digitize our records will continue to occur, and we need to consider carefully what our concerns are. Our records are deep and rich, providing not only a wealth of genealogical information, but also the stories of our communities and our corporate journeys following the leadings of God.

The Worship and Action Updates and Peace Letters from 2002–2007 were printed and sent to Friends Historical Library, along with an electronic copy. Friends, this is an important body of work, nearly 500 pages long.

It has been noted that Google Books has digitized many of the books and minutes published by New York Yearly Meeting. Many—but not all—of the titles from the 19th and early 20th centuries are available as full view items. At this time, we're watching this situation and considering the possibilities. In the meantime, there are some interesting and useful historical resources available to us all.

Bridget Bower, clerk

Sessions Committee

Our job as a committee is to make sure NYYM's three annual sessions occur and are successful events from an organizational perspective. Our Fall and Spring Sessions Subcommittee now has a separate handbook to help us and the local host committees work well to plan and carry out the support functions of the sessions that now happen in November and April. Many hours and many volunteer Friends in the host regions are always needed, and the eventual outcomes always seem worth the effort—this past year in All Friends Region at Seton Hall University and in Farmington-Scipio Region at Chautauqua Institution.

Summer Sessions was the focus of our January committee day and the work of the Program Subcommittee. We have a new basis of joint work with Silver Bay YMCA, and the affordability issue has been addressed, but only partially. One important step is the creation of a new Equalization Fund, approved at Spring Sessions 2010 and for use in any of our sessions, to which contributions can be made to help more people attend more easily. A special day fee and better camping opportunities at the upcoming Summer Sessions will help some Friends. This year we have made changes in the afternoon schedule of Summer Sessions and will offer worship sharing groups on two afternoons, hoping that JYM staff and Liaison Committee members may find them more available.

The search for realistic alternative Summer Sessions sites for comparison has gone less successfully, with the task still unfinished.

John Cooley, clerk

TREASURER'S ACCOUNTS
Statement of Operations 1/1/09 to 12/31/09

	2009 Budget	2009 Actual
Disbursements and transfers:		
General Services		
<i>Section expense</i>		
General expense & travel	2,200	33.15
NYYM officers' expense	2,700	2,500.76
Audit	<u>3,050</u>	<u>3,075.00</u>
Total section expense	7,950	5,608.91
<i>Committees</i>		
Communications	23,000	24,423.81
<i>Handbook</i>		0.00
Other		0.00
Spark		14,271.11
Web site/Yearbook/Adv Reports		10,152.70
Nominating	450	572.89
Records		
Contribution—Friends Historical Library	3,000	3,000.00
Sessions Committee	10,200	9,581.52
Fall/Spring Sessions		3,674.99
Summer Sessions		5,544.25
Other		362.28
Total committee expense	36,650	37,578.22
<i>Office expense</i>		
Office operations		
Administrative expenses	14,800	10,695.68
Insurance	3,700	4,714.61
Rent & utilities 15th St.	24,500	24,570.75
Office staff travel	9,000	6,627.01
Computer consultation	800	0.00
Office equipment	1,500	525.01
Personnel		
Staff employee salaries	181,900	179,330.00
Hourly staff compensation	22,950	23,037.00
Salary and wage related expenses	51,625	45,749.41
Staff development	1,400	839.00
Volunteer support	500	291.25

Bookkeeping service	<u>31,200</u>	<u>31,200.00</u>
Total office expense	<u>343,875</u>	<u>327,579.72</u>
Total General Services	388,475	370,766.85

Ministry

<i>Section expense</i>	1,600	1,174.19
Programs		
Advancement Committee	7,000	5,770.33
Bible Study leader at YM	500	800.00
Conflict Transformation	1,250	0.00
Meeting program assistance	0	0.00
Ministry & Pastoral Care	250	250.00
Pastors' Conference	1,500	900.00
Provision for Friends Travel in Ministry	1,000	1,000.00
Total program expense	<u>11,500</u>	<u>8,720.33</u>
Total Ministry	13,100	9,894.52

Nurture

<i>Section expense</i>	2,650	2,166.14
NYYM Resource Library	300	367.00
Total section expense	2,950	2,533.14

Committees

Committee on Aging Concerns	500	0.00
FWCC Committee	150	0.00
Junior Yearly Meeting	23,000	19,435.75
Planning		1,119.87
Silver Bay		18,315.88
Young Adult Concerns	<u>1,500</u>	<u>112.86</u>
Total committee expense	25,150	19,548.61

NYYM appointee expense

FGC Central Committee	1,200	1,007.04
Quaker Earthcare Witness	800	0.00
FUM Board representatives	3,000	3,849.83
Provision for FUM Triennial Sessions	500	500.00
FWCC Section meetings	1,200	1,385.99
Provision for FWCC World Gathering	900	900.00
Provision for FWCC Regional Hosting	<u>50</u>	<u>50.00</u>
Total NYYM appointee expense	7,650	7,692.86

Allocations and donations

Friends Council on Education	150	150.00
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Friends General Conference	7,000	7,000.00
Friends LGBTQ Concerns	150	150.00
Friends United Meeting	7,000	7,000.00
FUM—Triennial Sessions 3rd World rep	600	200.00
FUM 3rd World Board reps	200	600.00
Friends World Committee	3,500	3,500.00
FWCC Section of the Americas	150	150.00
New Jersey Council of Churches*	150	150.00
N.Y.S. Council of Churches*	150	150.00
Oakwood School	11,000	11,000.00
Powell House	65,000	65,030.00
Quaker Earthcare Witness	150	150.00
Total allocations and donations	<u>95,200</u>	<u>95,230.00</u>
Total Nurture	130,950	125,004.61
Witness		
<i>Section/comm./app'tee/program expense</i>	4,750	619.19
Sharing Fund Campaign overhead	2,300	2,939.11
Total Witness	7,050	3,558.30
Meeting for Discernment	1,250	526.31
Contingency	<u>0</u>	<u>161.84</u>
Total Disbursements	537,400	521,969.27

**moved to Witness 4/08/08*

Receipts

Meetings		
All Friends Regional	59,700	59,512.50
Butternuts Quarterly	6,500	7,100.00
Farmington-Scipio Regional	68,000	67,021.00
Long Island Quarterly	58,500	60,265.50
New York Quarterly	77,625	62,831.05
Nine Partners Quarterly	36,900	36,913.00
Northeastern Regional	30,000	27,084.00
Purchase Quarterly	101,000	88,131.00
Shrewsbury & Plainfield HY	<u>49,000</u>	<u>49,461.00</u>
Total meeting income	<u>487,225</u>	<u>458,329.05</u>
Other sources		
Registration fees	28,600	24,022.99
Trustees	13,000	12,696.94
All other	<u>12,000</u>	<u>14,977.95</u>

Total other sources	<u>53,600</u>	<u>51,697.88</u>
Total receipts	540,825	510,026.93
Year 2009 opening balance		204,004.68
+ receipts		510,026.93
- disbursements		509,912.43
Closing balance		<u>204,119.18</u>
NET CHANGE		<u>114.50</u>

FUNDS REPORT (unaudited)

	Balance as of 1/1/09	Sharing Fund Campaign Income	Other Income	Dist.	Closing Balance 12/31/09
Sharing Fund					
AVP donation	0.00	2,641.74	0.00	2,641.74	0.00
Barrington Dunbar	6,818.90	13,099.95	0.00	14,250.00	5,668.85
Cons. Object to Paying for War	2,201.04	2,421.49	0.00	0.00	4,622.53
Friends for Black Concerns	2,689.93	3,382.24	0.00	3,619.83	2,452.34
Indian Affairs Committee	1,323.43	4,843.49	4,687.60	8,433.95	2,420.57
MMNA Working Group	440.22	1,480.99	0.00	0.00	1,921.21
NYYM named representatives	1,320.58	1,110.73	0.00	150.00	2,281.31
Peace Concerns Committee	3,953.24	1,970.50	0.00	1,561.80	4,361.94
Prisons Committee	2,453.50	4,252.49	0.00	3,340.48	3,365.51
Right Sharing	4,564.37	1,851.25	0.00	6,415.62	0.00
Torture Awareness Working Group	440.22	50.00	0.00	0.00	490.22
Witness Activities	7,604.15	2,591.74	0.00	4,192.95	6,002.94
World Ministries	<u>3,072.12</u>	<u>2,691.74</u>	<u>22,000.13</u>	<u>11,300.00</u>	<u>16,463.99</u>
Total Sharing Fund	36,881.70	42,388.35	26,687.73	55,906.37	50,051.41

Total Sharing Fund income less Trustee income	42,388.35
2009 Sharing Fund Goal	60,000.00
Percentage of Goal	70.6%

FUNDS REPORT (unaudited)—cont.

	Balance as of 1/1/09	Transfers from Oper. Budget	Other Income	Dist.	Closing Balance 12/31/09
Other funds					
Advancement—Lafayette	2,365.33	0.00	6,115.00	1,534.00	6,946.33
Advancement—Leach	2,065.60	0.00	3,187.50	3,658.10	1,595.00
Advancement—Women	713.73	0.00	578.13	1,052.50	239.36
Aging Concerns	0.00	0.00	39,360.00	30,290.15	9,069.85
Aging Resources Web site	0.00	0.00	7,430.00	8,450.60	(1,020.60)
<i>Faith & Practice</i> fund	1,723.08	0.00	832.15	362.61	2,192.62
Sufferings Fund	4,700.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	4,700.00
FWCC Triennial NYYM attendance	1,400.00	900.00	0.00	0.00	2,300.00
Gospel Order packets	286.69	0.00	0.00	0.00	286.69
FUM Triennial NYYM attendance	123.59	500.00	0.00	0.00	623.59
FUM Kenya Board Meeting	0.00	0.00	1,000.00	0.00	1,000.00
Records preservation	1,341.72	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,341.72
FWCC Quadrennial Operating	1,660.00	50.00	0.00	0.00	1,710.00
Meeting visitation	11,648.13	1,000.00	49.00	1,785.88	10,911.25
Youth/Young Adults	7,015.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	7,015.00
Youth/Young Adults Concerns	0.00	0.00	813.91	0.00	813.91
Mosher Fund	0.00	0.00	15,601.29	9,238.44	6,362.85
YFIR Fund	0.00	0.00	31,952.00	6,491.05	25,460.95
Fall/Spring Sessions	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total other funds	<u>35,042.87</u>	<u>2,450.00</u>	<u>106,918.98</u>	<u>62,863.33</u>	<u>81,548.52</u>
Total funds	71,924.57	44,838.35	133,606.71	118,769.70	131,599.93

Trustees, Lindley Murray Fund

The Lindley Murray Fund was established in 1836, with its income to be used to promote the education of blacks and Indians, to distribute books “tending to promote piety and virtue and the truth of Christianity,” and to “assist and relieve the poor in any description and in any manner that may be judged proper.” Since 1915 the Yearly Meeting also administers the fund of the New York Female Association (www.swarthmore.edu/library/friends/ead/4095nyfe.xml), which was established in 1798 to aid the sick poor; it also opened schools for poor children. Seven and one-half per cent of the total annual income is to be forwarded to the NYFA.

The Fund’s FY 2009 income was awarded as follows:

AFSC, to be apportioned among:	7,000
Quaker United Nations Office	
Healing Justice Program, N.J.	
Community Violence Prevention Project	
Alternatives to Violence	1,400
Amerinda	1,870
(empowers Native Americans through the arts)	
Ann Schillinger (for work with Redemption Center)	596
Bolivian Quaker Education Fund	1,680
Creative Response to Conflict	2,300
Friends Committee on National Legislation	1,120
Friends General Conference	1,300
<i>Friends Journal</i>	2,800
Indian Affairs Committee (NYYM)	1,870
Oakwood Friends School	3,735
Powell House	2,300
Redemption Center	930
(transitional housing for the formerly incarcerated)	
Westbury Friends School (new)	3,735
Youth Service Opportunities Project	1,800
New York Female Association	(7.5%) 2,792
 TOTAL GIVEN	 37,228

Our new awardee is Westbury Friends School, which has undertaken a project to study “the Quaker involvement in the settlement of Westbury, the connection to slavery on Long Island and the Underground

Railroad,” and to develop a curriculum based on their findings.

We welcome suggestions (preferably made by October 1) for other recipients that fit the criteria.

Clerk for next year will be Todd Tilton.

Judith Inskeep, clerk

Trustees, New York Yearly Meeting

The dividend paid by the NYYM Trustees’ Unit Plan in 2009 was \$3.19, as compared to \$3.11 in 2010.

The trustees gave two contributions in 2009: \$10,000 to the new Young Friends in Residence (YFIR) Fund maintained by the YM treasurer, and one for \$1,000 to the School of the Spirit through Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. Both contributions were made from the Florence Stevens Fund.

We are continuing our efforts to settle the titles of two meetings that have been laid down, one in Monkton, Vermont, and one in Yorktown Heights, New York.

Todd Tilton, clerk

*NYYM Trustees Financial Report
Distribution of Funds for Year 2009*

These dividends from certain trust funds are distributed regularly twice yearly to those beneficiaries who have been previously determined by the trust donors and/or by action of the Yearly Meeting.

Oakwood scholarship	25,665.75
Oakwood administrative	49,470.00
H.H. Mosher	4,175.63
Powell House	12,436.03
Advancement Committee	3,665.63
Nine Partners Quarterly Meeting	1,905.90
World Ministries	22,000.13
New York Yearly Meeting	12,696.94
Friends Foundation for the Aging	5,393.25
Manasquan Monthly Meeting	2,656.78
Indian Affairs Committee	3,487.60
Friends Historical Library	7,284.09

Funds under management

Scarsdale Monthly Meeting	1,178.09
New Brunswick Monthly Meeting	1,199.66
Montclair Monthly Meeting	23,623.26
Farmington-Scipio Region	2,090.56
Cornwall Monthly Meeting	4,829.87
Buffalo Monthly Meeting	<u>2,244.26</u>

TOTAL 186,003.43

NYYM Retained Income Funds—2009 Summary

The income from these funds is held until a request is received that meets with the purposes of the fund as designated by the donor and/or the Yearly Meeting. Some of these funds are released at the request of specific committees or regions of the Yearly Meeting and others are released at the discretion of the Yearly Meeting Trustees.

Fund	Bal 1-1-09	Income	Disbursements	Bal 12-31-09
Haines	1,875.11	1,774.24	0.00	3,649.35
Sutton	619.66	354.08	0.00	973.74
Monkton	13,510.24	1,913.68	654.00	14,769.92
Yorktown-Underhill	2,004.80	1,106.80	0.00	3,111.60
Stevens	11,961.06	6,768.88	6,875.00	11,854.94
Beers	506.68	287.04	0.00	793.72
Smith	1,240.00	701.80	0.00	1,941.80
Morris Cemetery	15,020.24	654.68	0.00	15,674.92
Lockport	1,382.38	897.48	0.00	2,279.86
Brinkerhoff	254.34	778.36	0.00	1,032.70
York	10,207.34	10,740.72	11,000.00	9,948.06
Sufferings	<u>5,545.60</u>	<u>1,048.64</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>6,594.24</u>
TOTAL	64,127.45	27,026.40	18,529.00	72,624.85
Funds under management				
Lindley Murray	39,095.56	36,728.16	38,595.94	37,227.78
Unrestricted funds				
General	2,389.20	642.12	0.00	3,031.32
Florence Stevens	10,855.70	6,394.28	11,000.00	6,249.98
Trustees administrative	23,806.58	13,523.93	3,520.00	33,810.51

NURTURE SECTION

Nurture Coordinating Committee

This has been a time of transition for the Nurture Section and its constituent committees. After several years of intensely committed, incredibly knowledgeable and devoted service, Melanie-Claire Mallison ended her tenure as clerk of Nurture Coordinating Committee. She was succeeded (but hardly replaced) by Cheshire Frager.

In addition, several newer committees have been getting their sea legs, and representatives to larger Quaker bodies have been coping with the effects of the Great Recession on those organizations and on our Yearly Meeting's capacity to support them financially, and to enable travel in Friends' service to those parts of our broader community. The theme of financial constraints recurs in committee and representative reports in this section, as it no doubt does in others.

Within the Nurture Section are not only committees that link us to the broader circles of Friends around the USA and the world, but those that address the needs of Friends at almost every stage of life.

The Youth Committee seeks to integrate the work of Junior Yearly Meeting, Young Friends in Residence (YFIR), Fall and Spring Session youth programs, the Powell House Youth Program, Oakwood School, First Day schools, the Resource Library, etc. How to do this is no simple matter. Thus, the major test in the past year has been defining the committee's responsibilities and operation, as reflected in the composition of its *Handbook* page.

Oakwood faces challenges in its commitment to be an inclusive community, including economic status, in the face of increased need from families and reduced (or eliminated) funding sources. New members of the Board of Managers have helped it continue in this commitment. They have also sponsored their sixth service visit to New Orleans, as well as a "fair trade" trip to Nicaragua.

Powell House has also faced financial and other challenges in this year, such as staff turnover, all of which must be dealt with without adversely affecting the experience of those attending weekend programs and meetings. On the other hand, there is joy in how well received adult programming is, how beloved the youth program is, and in noting of the tenth anniversary of the tenure of Mike Clark and Chris DeRoller, the youth directors. They and Ann Davidson, executive director, remain the bedrock of the organization. And Powell House is gearing up to celebrate its fiftieth anniversary!

Now in its third year, the ARCH program has become a presence

in our regions and monthly meetings, conducting nine workshops in the July 2009–July 2010 program year to help Friends understand issues of aging and resources available. Besides our two amazing ARCH coordinators, Anita Paul and Barbara Spring, approximately 40 Friends have volunteered to serve as ARCH Visitors, operating within their regions after training. The Committee on Aging Concerns, which oversees the ARCH program, has been grappling with administrative and financial procedures, as well as actual grant applications.

In September 2009 the YFIR program, after a long period of planning and organizing, implemented a pilot program at Perry City Meeting. YFIR addresses a trinity of concerns about the vitality of monthly meetings: the development of the next generation of NYYM leadership, deepening Friends' spiritual life, and fostering the involvement of adolescents and their families. As implemented, three young adult Friends are living in community with oversight by Perry City Friends. Their work has included programs for local youth and for adult Friends. The relationship between the interns and local Friends has clearly been nurturing for both, as both have nurtured each other.

Interestingly, both these committees depend on outside funding sources to do their work. This requires discipline in researching and identifying possible funders, in meeting their requirements per deadlines, proposal formats and content, and reporting back. They must be thinking several months ahead to new deadlines and new sources, getting the documentation assembled—some of which has to be obtained from the Yearly Meeting—translating from Quaker terminology for roles and relationships, and Quaker structures, to the assumptions in the funders' requirements. And they must meet our NYYM procedural requirements. All this while providing the services for which they exist and participating in the life of the Yearly Meeting! Those of us who simply come up with a committee budget each year can appreciate the added labor and complexity this brings.

Representatives to FUM, FGC, and FWCC are all dealing with the consequences of severe reductions in donations both to these organizations, and thus their missions, and to the ability of these representatives themselves to travel and fulfill their responsibilities to the Friends' organization and to NYYM. As Quaker umbrella bodies, FGC, FWCC, and FUM depend on contributions from member yearly meetings or Friends, all of whom are themselves facing reduced income. Yearly meetings in Africa and Latin America, whose needs are greatest, are experiencing more intense deprivation. When US yearly meetings lose income, we lose from wealth; when they lose, they lose from poverty.

Consider that FWCC's International Planning Committee and

Central Executive Committee met in Kenya this year, and their sixth World Conference of Friends will be held there in August 2012, as will a special joint FUM General Board meeting this July. The costs of travel, domestically and internationally, by those under appointment from NYYM as representatives to these bodies, cannot be adequately subsidized by the Yearly Meeting budget. Does this mean that only Friends of means can be our representatives? Is that how we wish to conduct these matters?

We operate in a money culture, in which Friends try to live lives of the spirit, individually and corporately. During times of financial stress, such as we have experienced since the 2008 crash, monetary concerns seem to intrude upon our spiritually inspired efforts more than usual, most frustratingly. This is when we can be most moved by those Friends whose commitment to serve is undiminished, even sacrificial, and most grateful for the work of the spirit that continues, gathering, nurturing, and healing the world.

Cheshire Frager, clerk

Committee on Aging Concerns

Committee on Aging Concerns (CAC) began the year with a two-day retreat at Oakwood Friends School, for committee members and ARCH coordinators. We had an opportunity for deep listening in worship, brainstorming, and processing of the work of ARCH staff and earlier committees, as well as considering possibilities for the future. We were heartened and encouraged by the work already done, and hopeful as we planned to mutually respond to the needs arising with the aging, their families, and meetings in New York Yearly Meeting.

We were in communication with the Friends Foundation for the Aging (FFA), the funding body of the ARCH program. CAC members were in phone conversation with select members of FFA, considering several issues relating to the function of the ARCH program. We anticipate a close relationship with FFA as we proceed. ARCH coordinators Barbara Spring and Anita Paul made a major contribution in preparing the grant proposal for the coming year.

A major task of the committee this year was to enhance the administrative structures in support of the ARCH program, now entering its third year. This has included refining personnel policies and financial procedures. It is the intention of the committee and the coordinators that we conduct the work of ARCH as a spiritual practice.

It is expected that those who carry out the ministry and work of the ARCH program are called to that ministry. Both coordinators and two committee members will attend an Eldering training weekend at Woolman Hill Quaker Center in May 2010.

The ARCH program will be expanded during 2010, to include as many as 40 friends from meetings within the Yearly Meeting. These volunteers, to be called ARCH Visitors, will receive training in the needs of the aging, and in services available to them and to their families, caregivers, and meetings. Each will work in collaboration with Ministry and Council of his/her monthly meeting and in close contact with the coordinators. We plan to hold two training sessions for Visitors, the first to be held at Oakwood Friends School in early June, and the second at Dundee, N.Y., in September. We hope through this effort to substantially increase knowledge of the needs of seniors among us, and the possibilities of support for them, their families, and their meetings.

As of this writing, the ARCH coordinators have conducted seven workshops at meetings within the Yearly Meeting, and have scheduled two more before Summer Sessions at Silver Bay. These workshops are designed to look at several issues around aging, giving Friends the opportunity to: (1) look at their individual values around death

and funerals, and how those values were developed in their lives; (2) thoughts on setting up caregiver teams when needed; (3) looking at forgiveness as a spiritual opportunity in the last third of life.

In workshops, Friends are informed of the several possibilities to plan for their own care, including consideration of how they would like to be cared for as they approach the end of life, including the possibility that the individual, of any age, may not be able to communicate those wishes at some time.

The other focus of the work of ARCH is one-on-one consultations with Friends, families, and/or meetings. Each scheduled consultation may last up to two hours, giving time to tell the story, identify unmet needs, and ask questions. The ARCH staff can suggest services that are available to a senior and how to apply for them, reflect on other options that might improve quality of life for the senior, or support the caregiver(s). In addition, numerous consultations occur in an unscheduled manner, shorter, and often on a specific issue, at a time when a Friend may approach an ARCH coordinator at some Quaker event.

In addition to the work presented above, ARCH coordinators are engaged with the Care and Aging staff of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting to create a shared Web site in a project jointly funded by Friends Foundation for the Aging and the Scattergood Foundation. The Web site, www.quakeragingresources.org, is expected to be up and running in mid-2010.

We look forward to continuing the work.

Norma Ellis, coclerk

Friends General Conference representatives

Fourteen NYYM representatives serve on Friends General Conference (FGC) Central Committee, which serves as the governing board. (Some Friends may not be aware that FGC Gathering is a time for spiritual nurture and no business is conducted there.)

At the 2009 meeting, we approved a new Minute of Purpose and clarified our major goals. We hope this is a clear statement of what we do, both for ourselves and for others.

Minute of Purpose:

Friends General Conference, with Divine guidance, nurtures the spiritual vitality of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) by providing programs and services for Friends, meetings, and seekers.

Major Goals

1. Nurture meetings and worship groups.
2. Provide resources and opportunities for meetings, Friends, and seekers to experience the Light, the living presence of God.
3. Help meetings guide Friends to discern the leadings of the Inward Teacher and to grow into ministry.
4. Transform our awareness so that our corporate and individual attitudes and actions fully value and encompass the blessed diversity of our human family.
5. Work to grow and sustain a vital, diverse, and loving community of Friends based on a shared search for unity in the Spirit.
6. Articulate, communicate, and exemplify Friends' practices, core experiences, and the call to live and witness to our faith.
7. Promote dialogue with others, sharing with them our corporate experience of Divine Truth and listening to and learning from their experience of the same.

The economic climate prompted considerable thought on ways to make the organization more flexible and more efficient. Several sub-committees are experimenting with ways to do the work with fewer face-to-face meetings. The end-of-year financial report was better than expected, but there is still a need to conserve both finances and other resources.

FGC is an extraordinarily complex organization, with a lot of things going on. It would require a very long report to describe all the projects which the various committees are working on. Here—briefly—are just a few of the things that have been happening.

- We celebrated the recent affiliation of Intermountain Yearly Meeting.
- There have been improvements to the Quaker Finder Web site.
- The bookstore now has a program for receiving and reselling used Quaker books. They have also added a Quaker marketplace, which sells craft items made by Friends. Plans are being made to do some electronic publishing in addition to continuing to publish printed books.
- Quaker Quest continues as an exciting and growing program. Trainers are available to visit meetings.
- The traveling ministries program visited 28 meetings in 2009.

- The Couple Enrichment program held eight events.
- Sixteen meetings have loans from the Friends Meeting House Fund. Money is available for improvements or repairs of meetinghouses.
- The youth ministries program has improved their Web site. Among many other things are fliers with advice for meetings on various issues specific to children and high school and college students.
- The Committee for Ministry on Racism visited 8 yearly meetings last year, to learn of needs regarding issues of race.
- Fourteen clerks from ten yearly meetings were nurtured by the third Consultation for Yearly Meeting Clerks.
- The Religious Education Committee is holding trainings for the relatively new “Godly Play” and “Faith and Play” curricula. Many people are quite excited by this program. They are also working on a third volume of the Sparklers curriculum.
- The 2010 Gathering was held at Bowling Green State University in Ohio. The 2011 Gathering will be at Grinnell College, Grinnell, Iowa.

To learn more, visit the display table or check out the Web site at www.fgcquaker.org.

Karen Snare, clerk

Friends United Meeting representatives

New York Yearly Meeting’s representatives to the Friends United Meeting (FUM) General Board for the 2008–2011 triennium are Christopher Sammond, Beatrice Beguin, and Steven Ross. Regina Haag and Ann Davidson serve as alternates, and Carol Holmes continues to serve as recording clerk by appointment of FUM. Each representative serves on at least one committee of the board. Steve also serves under a separate appointment as a trustee and Regina on the planning committee for FUM’s 2011 Triennial Sessions in Wilmington, Ohio.

Since NYYM’s 2009 Summer Sessions, the FUM North America General Board has held two regularly scheduled meetings and two special sessions. One of these regular board meetings and one of the two special sessions were held in New York. A combined session of the North America and Africa General Boards is scheduled for July 2010 in Kenya. Two representatives from NYYM are registered to attend.

The North American General Board continues to work with issues arising in part as a result of shortfalls in unrestricted financial support and reduced investment income. Significant attention has been given to reaching clarity regarding what kind of organization FUM is, what its mission, purpose, and programmatic focus should be, and what the nature of its relationship is with its member yearly meetings.

Work continues toward achieving a greater measure of parity between the part of FUM that is based in North America and those meetings that are increasingly coming into their own in other parts of the world.

Overseas programs continue to be actively supported in Kenya and neighboring parts of eastern Africa, in Belize, and in Ramallah. A program for emerging leaders in North America will be held in Richmond, Indiana, this fall.

FUM General Secretary Sylvia Graves will be retiring at the conclusion of FUM's Triennial Sessions in the summer of 2011, and the search for her successor is underway.

We look forward to having more to share following the combined North America and Africa General Board Sessions in early July.

Steve Ross, clerk

Friends World Committee for Consultation

Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) strives to unite Friends around the world through Spirit-led fellowship and opportunities for interchange and mutual understanding. At FWCC gatherings one experiences blended worship traditions and shares conversations with liberal, Conservative, and Evangelical Friends from various countries. This year, Friends from Cuba, Bolivia, Honduras, Peru, and Jamaica were able to get visas.

At the annual meeting we learned of two initiatives. One is the Global Change Consultation planned for 2011. In view of the urgency presented by global change, which includes economic disruption and increased immigration as well as climate, action is needed. Is there a distinctive Quaker response? The purpose of the Consultation is to ask ourselves how our lives are contributing to the causes of detrimental changes, what actions we might take to live in right relationships as part of the global community, and what Friends have to offer to each other and to the world at large. In preparation for the Consultation there are to be regional cluster meetings, face-to-face encounters where people can tell their sto-

ries in response to queries. The responses and stories shared in the clusters may be passed on to other clusters and to the international consultation. In this way we might link those who contribute to the causes of environmental problems with those who must face living with the consequences (www.fwccglobalchange.org).

The other initiative is to sponsor regional gatherings in connection with the World Conference of Friends in 2012 in Kenya, whose theme is “Being Salt and Light: Friends living the Kingdom of God in a broken world” (Matt. 5:12-14). The goal is to bring FWCC to where Friends are, to engage a much larger number of Friends than will be able to attend the Conference. FWCC will prepare a study pack, and also plans to offer an online course focusing on different aspects of the theme, as well as other opportunities for Friends to share their views and thoughts. This will lead to a Conference book being prepared, which will bring together the various ideas and issues that will be generated. Ultimately, the theme should guide the Conference in discerning concrete ways in which Friends can live the Kingdom of God in a broken world (www.saltandlight2012.org).

If your meeting is interested in hosting either a cluster or a regional gathering, please contact me for more information.

Do you know that:

a) FWCC sponsors the Wider Quaker Fellowship, a ministry of literature that lifts up voices of Friends of different countries, languages, and Quaker traditions, pointing to the heart of our beliefs. WQF sends out two mailings a year in English and one in Spanish; these are also posted on the Web site (www.fwccamericas.org/publications/wqf.shtml).

b) The Quaker United Nations Office, which brings matters of concern to Friends to the attention of diplomats, is under the aegis of FWCC, which has had consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council since 1948 (www.quono.org).

Judith Inskip

Junior Yearly Meeting Committee

This year has been an exciting one for our Junior Yearly Meeting Committee. Our volunteers facilitated a very successful program at Summer Sessions. The youths in each age group were motivated and showed great interest in their activities. By all accounts, the JYM program was a positive experience for everyone who participated.

In addition, many activities scheduled in the afternoon and evening were well attended by JYM youth and they participated brilliantly in both Café Night and the presentations of their epistles to the Yearly Meeting community at the end of the week.

Each morning, our tenth-, eleventh-, and twelfth-graders attended worship sharing with great success for many of them. The teens who participated in the men's worship sharing reported that it was especially rewarding for them. We continued to work on encouraging each age group to attend community worship at noon in the auditorium. The last day of community worship was a very powerful experience for many of us with the youth singing as they walked in. As the transition into community worship at the end of each morning continues, we look forward to our youth bringing even more energy to our Quaker community.

Our JYM Committee meetings at Silver Bay were well attended with 19 youth and adults participating in our last one. At our September meeting, which took place at the Quaker Intentional Village community in Canaan, New York, four of our teen clerks were present and shared their ideas with us as to how we could facilitate teen business meetings during Summer Sessions. At that meeting, we came to unity on a minute inviting our six teen clerks and their teen advisors to participate in Arthur Larrabee's clerking workshop in February at Powell House. At Fall Sessions in November, the senior high clerks and other youth in attendance participated in a mini-clerking workshop led by Steve Mohlke. When February came, Arthur Larrabee's clerking workshop was a great success and our teen clerks followed up by organizing a youth-led teen-planning weekend at Purchase Meeting, which also went very well. We look forward to their plan to gather into their own meeting for worship with a concern for business each day as they return from worship sharing in the morning. Our teen clerks are awesome.

Due to budget constraints this past year, JYM, like other committees, was asked to cut back its request for funds from the Yearly Meeting. Understanding the economic hardship felt by many in our yearly meeting, we still intend to provide the best program we can for our children and will continue to build the Friendly community during our week at Silver Bay.

Peter Close, clerk

Oakwood Friends School

Oakwood Friends School has again enjoyed a year of optimism and energy, healthy student enrollment, a balanced budget, strong academic programs, and meaningful community worship against a backdrop of challenging local and world events. Faculty and students have worked together to strike a balance among conceptual study, experiential learning, creative expression, physical skills and athletics, engaged service, and reflective worship, all within the context of Quaker principles. And since our last report one year ago, five new faculty babies have joined our school community!

Our primary institutional challenge in this era of economic uncertainty has been to find ways to support our many families who qualify for need-based financial aid in order to afford an Oakwood education. Our mission calls us to reach out to Quaker and non-Quaker families alike, and to draw students who exemplify diversity in its many forms: religious, economic, racial, ethnic, geographical, and family configuration. We believe that our Quaker mission calls us to nurture a community where we may all learn from our differences and similarities, and where we may develop the skills and habits of respect, deep listening, and collaborative effort. Oakwood has always offered need-based financial aid, but in recent years the needs have become greater and families are increasingly stretched. Many loan- and grant-making organizations have reduced or eliminated their programs over the past two years, thereby creating additional challenges for families and for schools like Oakwood. Despite these obstacles, we remain committed to providing an educational setting based on Quaker values to an economically diverse group of students and families—both Quaker and non-Quaker alike.

Our Board of Managers, which includes many members of New York Yearly Meeting, has welcomed several new members, both Quaker and non-Quaker, alumni, parent, and “at-large,” who bring significant skills in the areas of finance, buildings and grounds, community outreach, and Quaker process. Thanks to the energy and expertise of new and returning members, and of co-opted subcommittee members, the Board continues to thoughtfully and prudently address the financial challenges associated with the current economy while planning for Oakwood’s future direction and needs, always keeping the school’s mission at the center of its deliberations. In the past three years, fifteen members of the Board have participated in the “Governance Matters!” workshops run by the Friends Council on Education, one of which we hosted on Oakwood’s campus this past fall. This has been an important way for Board members to hone their

skills and to share challenges and joys with peers from other Friends schools around the country. This year, Board members participated in a series of on-line “webinars” on governance and financial sustainability, again organized by the Friends Council.

Two significant service projects have continued to have ripple effects across the Oakwood community and beyond. This year, the school sponsored our sixth trip to New Orleans to help with ongoing post-Katrina rebuilding efforts. Students and faculty also participated in our tenth “fair labor” trip (this time to Nicaragua) under the auspices of Oakwood’s “No Sweat” club and the New York State Labor-Religion Coalition. Previous trips had taken students and faculty to Ciudad Juárez in Mexico, but drug-related violence there has caused us to seek different destinations for our exploration and learning. The “No Sweat” club actively continues its mission of educating our community about fair labor practices and the effects of global trade on under-resourced populations.

All of you who support Oakwood Friends School participate in our school’s endeavors, however far you may be from the campus. None of the school’s work could be done without those who have helped to sustain and nurture this institution over the years. Alumni, members of the Board of Managers, parents, faculty, staff, administrators, friends of the school, and Friends in New York Yearly Meeting and beyond, all work together to make this school an exceptional place for young people to learn and to form the values that will guide them on the varied paths of their lives.

Peter F. Baily, head of school

William F. Bogle Jr. '76, president, Board of Managers

Elsie K. Powell House Inc.

The Powell House Committee may be the only committee in NYYM that has corporate bylaws to be followed in our governance. Our bylaws set forth our committee meeting schedule, currently three a year, and require us to make decisions by the Quaker process of sense of the meeting. They define Powell House as the “Quaker conference and retreat center of New York Yearly Meeting” and our mission as “fostering the spiritual growth of Friends and others, and strengthening the application of Quaker testimonies in the world.”

I am writing this report not only because NYYM asked me to, but also because the bylaws direct me to: “The president (clerk) shall present an annual report of the affairs of the Corporation at the annual

meeting of members which, subject to any changes or amendments approved at the annual meeting of members, shall constitute the annual or advance report of the Corporation to New York Yearly Meeting and shall be forwarded to the Yearly Meeting prior to its annual sessions.” The founding Friends of Powell House, the original writers of our bylaws, also wrote in the earliest committee minutes fifty years ago this summer, that Powell House was to be “the spiritual heart of New York Yearly Meeting.” The current committee is charged with the task of ensuring that the Powell House mission statement is carried out and that the spiritual heart of New York Yearly Meeting is available to those who come seeking spiritual growth.

This past year was a time of transition for Powell House, and the Powell House Committee. At the May 2009 committee weekend, the committee approved hiring a Quaker management consultant to work with staff and the board to bring clarity to roles and responsibilities, to reduce stresses on staff and the tensions that occur as a result of these stresses. After a search, Donald K. Mick was engaged and spent time with staff, the Personnel Subcommittee, the new clerk of the committee, Angela York Crane, the clerk of the Personnel Subcommittee, Tom Rothschild, and the executive director, Ann Davidson. It is the committee’s sense that Don’s work with us was fruitful and the recommendations he made to the committee and the executive director are being implemented as way opens. Both the Powell House staff and the committee feel the results in terms of higher energy, less tension, and more openness.

During this time, the executive director and the Personnel Subcommittee of Powell House spent considerable time in deep personal and communal discernment concerning some serious and long-standing personnel issues, resulting in decisions made and carried out in accordance with Powell House bylaws and the personnel policy.

Liseli Haines, former property manager, reported to the committee on January 3, 2010, that “Turning in the ‘Capital Campaign Card’ felt like the end of the ACC renovation, at least for Phase One. What is next? I am currently working on a ten-year plan for all of Powell House.” Although Liseli has left Powell House’s employ, we are grateful for her long service and her recent efforts during the Anna Curtis Center renovation. And for the ten-year plan she graciously left behind.

Buffy Curtis, registrar, left Powell House’s employ January 6, 2010. We thank her for her service to Powell House.

This year at Silver Bay marks the 10-year anniversary for our youth directors, Mike Clark and Chris DeRoller. In their written report to the committee for the May 2010 committee weekend, they summed up

their experience this way: “Since September of 2000 we have served over 800 individuals in the youth program, facilitated over 200 youth conferences and trained over 180 junior counselors. (An interesting aside for those who have asked, during that time the percentage of folks who identify as Quakers within the youth program has increased to 66%.)”

And Powell House has new staff: Sharon Koomler started on February 25, 2010, working 16–24 hours a week doing registrations for the adult/family weekends as well as answering the phone. Barbara Hofman started her bookkeeping position March 17, 2010, working 8 hours a week. Doug Stalker started as property manager April 14, 2010, working 24 hours a week. All three live locally. All three are adjusting to life on that boundary of ministry and business where Powell House has always placed itself.

At the September 2009 committee weekend, members spoke to the query “What is my relationship with Powell House? What is Powell House’s relationship with me?” It seems as if this might also be a ripe query for NYYM—“What is our relationship with Powell House? What is Powell House’s relationship with NYYM?” Certainly, Powell House depends on the Yearly Meeting for financial support. Are we only business partners? No, I hope that we are much much more; I hope that Powell House is still serving the Yearly Meeting as its spiritual heart.

As Ann Davidson said in the executive director’s report she presented to the committee on May 8, 2010: “Powell House is in business, that’s true. Powell House is also in ministry. May the Spirit continue to lead and guide us in bringing Light into the world/ Love into Life and Hope filled with Peace for us all.”

*Angela York Crane, clerk
and president of Elsie K. Powell House Inc.*

SUMMARY BALANCE SHEET
as of March 31, 2010

	Mar 31, 2010	Mar 31, 2009
Assets		
Current assets		
Checking/savings	784,892.32	678,610.21
Accounts receivable	-6,000.00	-15,283.79
Other current assets	<u>933.38</u>	<u>3,814.56</u>
Total current assets	779,825.70	667,140.98
Fixed assets	<u>274,887.01</u>	<u>274,887.01</u>
Total assets	<u>1,054,712.71</u>	<u>942,027.99</u>
Liabilities & equity		
Liabilities		
Current liabilities		
Accounts payable	-502.38	0.00
Other current liabilities	<u>29,279.49</u>	<u>62,993.86</u>
Total current liabilities	<u>28,777.11</u>	<u>62,993.86</u>
Total liabilities	28,777.11	62,993.86
Equity	<u>1,025,935.60</u>	<u>879,034.13</u>
Total liabilities & equity	1,054,712.71	942,027.99

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
for the years ending March 31, 2010 and 2009

	3/31/10	3/31/09
Assets		
Current assets		
Checking/savings	784,892	678,610
Accounts receivable	2,003	(11,294)
Other current assets	<u>933</u>	<u>3,815</u>
Total current assets	787,828	671,131
Fixed assets	<u>274,887</u>	<u>274,887</u>
Total assets	<u>1,062,715</u>	<u>946,018</u>
Liabilities & equity		
Liabilities		
Current liabilities		
Accounts payable	3,014	4,171
Other current liabilities	<u>29,279</u>	62,994
Total current liabilities	32,293	67,165
Total liabilities	<u>32,293</u>	<u>67,165</u>
Equity	<u>1,030,422</u>	<u>878,853</u>
Total liabilities & equity	<u>1,062,715</u>	<u>946,018</u>

Young Adult Concerns Committee

This has been a very exciting time for the Young Adult Concerns Committee (YACC), having successfully planned and hosted two wonderful conferences, with the planning of another in August in the works! YACC has found it difficult to gather all of its committee members together during the school year, but is looking forward to Summer Sessions and hopefully some new members in the fall. We have found that the Circle of Young Friends is full of fabulous ideas, incredible spiritual depth, and great strength as a community. We feel grateful to be a part of it at this time.

Natalie Braun, clerk

Young Friends in Residence Committee

After several years of discernment, preparation, and communications with monthly meetings and young adult Friends, the Young Friends in Residence pilot program was launched in September 2009. The program is a joint collaboration between Perry City Monthly Meeting, which serves as host, and New York Yearly Meeting, which serves as the sponsoring organization.

In an October 2009 grant proposal we wrote:

Our work with young Friends and older Friends has shown us that there is much vitality within the Religious Society of Friends. We have valuable practices that are much needed in today's world. People within the wider community are longing for the wholeness that comes from our practices of seeking that of God within everyone, of listening deeply, and of living with integrity and simplicity. Strong, integrated, spirit-filled and active meetings are beacons of hope in the communities where they are.

The Young Friends in Residence (YFIR) program is designed to strengthen and revitalize the Religious Society of Friends by addressing three areas critical to the continued, or restored, health of our meetings: keeping adolescents and their families involved in the meeting; providing concrete and substantive opportunities to develop the leadership gifts of members and attenders, particularly among young adult Friends; and deepening the spiritual life and practices of individuals and the meeting.

There are currently three interns (Natalie Braun, Franklin Crump, and Anna Obermayer) living in residence at the Beloved Community

House in Newfield, N.Y., ten miles from Perry City Monthly Meeting. To date, the interns have held three middle school retreats and a high school workshop. Their outreach and inreach work has included: AVP workshops at Auburn prison; Quakerism 101 classes focusing on *Silence and Witness* by Michael L. Birkel and *Essays on the Quaker Vision of Gospel Order* by Lloyd Lee Wilson; monthly Bible studies and developing curriculum and leading First Day school for middle school and older youth. They are participating on Perry City's Ministry and Council Committee, Building and Grounds Committee, and Peace and Social Action Committee. They have worked with youth at NYYM Spring Sessions and Farmington-Scipio's Spring Gathering, and hosted two Circle of Young Friends retreats. For the personal spiritual nurture that grounds their work, the interns meet regularly with an elder and their anchor committee, and attend programs at Powell House and Pendle Hill as time allows. Much growth has occurred in their spirited, deep conversations with one another on long car rides and around the table.

Support for the pilot program has come from a number of sources. We received \$20,000 from The Thomas H. and Mary Williams Shoemaker Fund, \$10,000 from the NYYM trustees, almost \$8,500 from Farmington-Scipio Regional Meeting, \$1,000 from the Nurture Coordinating Committee of NYYM, and contributions from Butternuts Quarter, Ithaca Monthly Meeting, and parents of youth attending the retreats. Each intern also received a Clarence and Lilly Pickett Leadership Grant. Ithaca Monthly Meeting is handling payment and record-keeping for local expenses. Perry City Monthly Meeting has been wonderful in offering a home to the program, providing a house at cost to the interns and giving them encouragement, oversight, and friendship. Their willingness to be faithful and to take a chance at something new and difficult has been such a blessing to the YFIR program.

Much good is already coming out of the YFIR program. A parent of a youth attending the first middle school retreat shared the following:

I arrived a bit early Sunday morning. I made myself a cup of tea and enjoyed the feeling of the meetinghouse. It was alive in a way that I've never experienced at Perry City. There was obviously a good, lively discussion going on in the Intro to Quakerism group. I could hear the youth playing capture the flag out back, there were signs of life everywhere. The class ended and the adults all went upstairs to sing. There was talking and laughter and an air of enjoyment. Having the class to gather Friends early and then a gap before worship has given them an opportunity to sing

together, which is obviously meaningful to them. The worship was rich and deep. I loved the fact that Friends were invited downstairs to join the youth for lunch and that just about all the Perry City Friends took you up on it. There was so much sharing and visiting going on! Integrating the youth with the meeting happened so naturally during that time.

I've visited Perry City a number of times over the last couple of years. The difference in the meeting is real and wonderful. I think YFIR is doing exactly what it was meant to do.

This upcoming year will be a crucial one for the YFIR Committee as we evaluate the pilot program and look at extending the YFIR program beyond the original two years. The committee is actively seeking an additional intern and more members for the committee. We are looking for Friends excited about this work to help identify more long-term funding sources for the program and visit monthly meetings to spread the word about YFIR. For more information you can contact the committee at yfirwg@gmail.com or the interns at yfirinterns@gmail.com.

Chris DeRoller and Amy Willauer-Obermayer, coclerks

Youth Committee

The Youth Committee was formed in 2009, the culmination of the work of the Task Group on Youth whose charge it had been to formulate a replacement for the laid down Religious Education Committee. By creating an umbrella youth committee, it was the Task Group's intention that more knowledge of each other's programs could lead to integration of existing youth work and effective planning and implementation of new work. Membership is composed of representatives from each of the committees under Nurture Coordinating Committee concerned with youth as well as nine at large members, at least three under the age of 18.

We are still not a completely formed and functioning committee but we are getting there! There has been turnover in membership and our *Handbook* page has still to be finally approved. Nor do we yet have full representative involvement of all the committees under the overall umbrella. However, judging by our meeting at Spring Sessions, we are benefiting from the energy and ideas of the participants and the vibrancy and involvement of the Young Friends running YFIR's first year in Perry City. The 2009 Summer Sessions opening night parent/guardian meeting, which is under our care, was well attended and well received and it is scheduled again for this year.

Ultimately, we are a committee that wants to knit together and strengthen what exists and be a springboard from which new methods, projects, programs can emerge. The challenge is finding the commitment and steadfastness that will be needed.

Margaret Lew, clerk pro tem

WITNESS SECTION

Witness Coordinating Committee

Friends are called to witness without ceasing. We understand that Jesus's call to love is also a call to act; that God's word is manifested in the work of women and men; that "faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead" James 2:14–17 (NRSV).

The following advance reports, from the committees under the care of Witness Coordinating Committee, relate many ways in which Friends in New York Yearly Meeting are engaging our world with the power of the Spirit. In 2009, Witness Coordinating Committee brought some of this engagement to the Yearly Meeting body in reports and proposed minutes.

Friends are working to end the use of torture by the United States, and NYYM has actively participated in this work. At Spring Sessions, NYYM approved a minute, upon the recommendation of our representatives to the National Religious Campaign against Torture (NRCAT) and the Torture Awareness Working Group, to endorse NRCAT's petition calling for an impartial, nonpartisan, and independent Commission of Inquiry to investigate the practice of torture by the United States and to make recommendations. (Minute 2009-04-26) The petition proclaimed our belief that "As people of faith, we know that brokenness can be healed—both in individual lives and in the life of the nation."

Through the work of the Prisons Committee, NYYM continues to be engaged with the struggles and needs of the incarcerated in our midst. Refining a Minute on Parole approved by the Yearly Meeting in 2007 (minute 2007-04-06), Prisons Committee brought forward at Spring Sessions its findings on five specific concerns that should be included in discussions of parole:

1. Definitive parole release criteria should be established that eliminate arbitrary release decision-making and establish specific things a person must accomplish to be released.
2. Parole preparation should begin at the beginning of a sentence.
3. Based on the pre-sentence report, a program prescription should be formulated for the person to accomplish while they are going to be in prison.
4. If a person completes the prescribed program, all others things being equal, the person should be "presumed" to be granted parole.

5. A comprehensive risk assessment instrument, including the release criteria, should be created to measure progress and evaluate release eligibility.

Friends approved a minute directing the Clerk and the general secretary to convey these concerns, together with the previously approved minute on parole, to the officials responsible for the New York State prison system and to other concerned and involved faith-based communities, and to urge them to work toward a more humane parole policy in New York State. (Minute 2009-04-11)

At Summer Sessions, Prisons Committee informed the Yearly Meeting body of the practice followed in the New York State prison system of shackling incarcerated pregnant women during childbirth. The New York State Senate and Assembly had passed a bill forbidding the use of restraints on incarcerated women during labor, delivery, and postpartum recovery, and restricting the use of restraints during transport to and from the hospital. Friends approved a minute directing the Clerk and general secretary, on behalf of New York Yearly Meeting, to convey to the governor of New York our opposition to this practice of restraints on incarcerated women and petitioning the governor to sign this bill and immediately end this practice. (Minute 2009-7-50)

At Fall Sessions, Witness Coordinating Committee reported to the Yearly Meeting body on a minute on access to health care (initially developed by Buffalo Monthly Meeting) that had been approved and forwarded by Brooklyn Monthly Meeting and New York Quarterly Meeting. Witness Coordinating Committee offered a minute, based on this work, that declared our belief that “Every person should have access to quality medical treatment” and urged our political representatives to implement “a just, sustainable, and simplified health care solution.” Friends approved and directed the Clerk to bring the concern reflected in the minute to the attention of elected federal officials, monthly meetings, and the public. (Minute 2009-11-39)

Also at Fall Sessions, Witness Coordinating Committee informed the Yearly Meeting body about a commission—the Truth Commission on Conscience in War—being formed to investigate and issue a report on rights of conscience among persons in the military. Friends approved becoming a cosponsor of the Truth Commission and sending representatives to the planned public hearing (which was held at Riverside Church in New York City in March 2010). (Minute 2009-11-40)

During 2009, Witness Coordinating Committee considered its responsibilities as shepherds of the Sharing Fund and approved a Policy on Bequests to the Sharing Fund. (*See* nyym.org/witness/wcc/shar-

fund-beq-09jul.pdf.)

Witness Coordinating Committee also accepted under its care from Nurture Coordinating Committee, with the approval of NYYM, the representative to Quaker Earthcare Witness and the Earthcare Working Group. (Minute 2009-11-28)

Witness Coordinating Committee presented to the Yearly Meeting body reports from Friends on our witness work (1) with Friends in the Republic of Georgia in response to their call for assistance after war broke out with Russia, (2) as representatives from NYYM to the “Heeding God’s Call” interfaith gathering on peace in Philadelphia January 13–17, 2009, (3) through the New York Metropolitan Regional Office of the American Friends Service Committee, (4) teaching English as a second language in El Salvador through the Committee of the Mothers of the Disappeared and Assassinated of El Salvador (the Comadres), and (5) in experiencing and facilitating Alternatives to Violence programs in prison and following release.

Finally, Witness Coordinating Committee sponsored and organized a Committee Fair at Summer Sessions. The Fair gave Friends an opportunity to learn more about the work of the committees and other groups throughout NYYM (and under the care of all the coordinating committees).

During the 12 months of 2009, the Sharing Fund received donations totaling \$42,388.35, 70.6% of the goal of \$60,000. Witness committees disbursed over \$55,906.37 of Sharing Funds (including funds from other sources and carry-over from the prior year). The Sharing Fund goal for 2009 was maintained at \$60,000 in light of the increasing challenges facing our society because of the current depressed economic realities.

Frederick Dettmer, clerk

Witness Activities Fund Grants in 2009:

Attendance at 10th annual White Privilege conference to colead workshop on “Understanding Racial Privilege through Storytelling” (Scarsdale MM)	600
Leading a Trauma Healing Workshop at the Bedford-Stuyvesant Redemption Center (Brooklyn MM)	2,200
Peace Camp intern support (Albany MM)	700
Travel to Republic of Georgia and assistance of Friends there with Alternatives to Violence workshops (Peace Concerns coordinator)	4,000
Support for work with the Redemption Center in Brooklyn, NY (Housatonic MM)	500
Assistance in bringing Healing Memories Workshops to prisons in New York (Prisons Committee)	1,800
Donation in connection with New York Yearly Meeting cosponsorship of the Truth Commission on Conscience in War (WCC)	500

Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP), Inc.

New York AVP has ongoing programs in 16 prisons, which include Albion, Arthur Kill, Attica, Auburn, Bedford Hills, Eastern, Elmira, Green Haven, Greene, Groveland, Mid-Orange, Otisville, Sing Sing, Sullivan, Wende, and Woodbourne.

In prison, there were 126 workshops held with 1,540 participants and 106 apprentice facilitators trained. Several workshops were conducted in Spanish and one special topic workshop was on parenting. In addition, there was a variety of mini workshops, recognition days, and special seminar days for facilitators. Forum Day this year was hosted at Bedford Hills—a maximum security women’s facility.

Community workshops were held in a variety of settings, with both adult, and multi-generational workshops presented. These settings included schools in Delhi and Walton, N.Y., and Friends meetinghouses in Albany, Elmira, Ithaca, New Paltz, New York City, Purchase, and Rochester, and two Friends’ conference centers, Burt House and Powell House. Community settings also included the Sister Karen Klimczak Center for Nonviolence in Buffalo, St. Joseph’s Collegiate Institute in Buffalo, Christ the King Seminary, East Aurora, N.Y., the Family Partnership Center in Poughkeepsie, N.Y., the Maryknoll Lay Missionaries Center in Ossining, N.Y., and Vassar College.

Twenty-six workshops were presented in the community with 334 participants and 63 apprentice facilitators trained. In addition, there were 27 adult and intergenerational mini workshops with 499 participants.

Youth workshops (for up to age 23) we refer to as “intergenerational” as there is almost always at least one adult participant. All community multigenerational workshops have participants under the age of 18, and one participant was age 10.

We currently have 197 inside facilitators and 112 active outside facilitators who were in a least one workshop, as well as 22 active youth (under age 18) facilitators.

We continue to struggle with finding enough volunteers to meet the demand for our program. We are in continual contact with the Department of Correctional Services (DOCS) as workshop hours and frequency in the prisons where we are active are often threatened and mid-week workshops are often the response of DOCS to their budget concerns. This makes it even more difficult to find volunteers who can do the workshops. We also sometimes find it difficult to have them allow formerly incarcerated facilitators back in to facilitate.

Highlights of 2009 include starting AVP in two new prisons by invitation from DOCS and the continuation of Landing Strip, a sup-

port group for returning prisoners, which meets twice monthly in Manhattan and Brooklyn. Both Green Haven Prison and Sing Sing Prison presented workshops specifically for incarcerated youth. We have held several anger management workshops in prisons and communities and piloted a trauma and healing workshop. A new special topic workshop on parenting has been followed up with support groups. There is a strong new community program in Rochester. We are considering a research project.

The AVP/USA National Conference was hosted by AVP New York in May 2009 at Adelphi University. This is a major undertaking by an AVP region and much of the organizational work fell to the Westchester Area Council. The conference was well attended, and a joyous opportunity for many facilitators from around the country to gather and exchange ideas and be together. Feedback from attendees indicated that a performance of *The Castle*—first-hand dramatizations of the lives of four formerly incarcerated New Yorkers and their reentry into society, and a plenary by Eddie Ellis—original Green Haven Think Tank participant and host of WBAI radio show *On the Count*—were the hits of the conference.

Our AVP/NY annual gathering at Seneca Lake continues to be well attended and an important opportunity for business and fellowship. Facilitators returning home from prison are able to join the circle and more than ten were with us in October. Their input opened up many ideas and new ways of thinking, and their perspective about AVP's involvement with transition into society is invaluable. It was decided to hold a series of retreats in different parts of the state to continue to discern the future direction of AVP/NY.

The AVP/NY Web site is complete and functioning well. Please visit us at www.avpny.org. Our newsletter continues to be well received and is available on the Web site.

Judy Meikle, clerk

Alternatives to Violence Project, Inc. (AVP-NY), Financial Report, 2009

Ordinary income/expense

Income

Direct public support	
Contributions — individual	17,899.52
Contributions — churches/meetings	2,023.00
Contributions — AVP programs	<u>3,390.00</u>
Total direct public support	23,312.52
Indirect public support	
Contributions — NYYM	<u>4,669.16</u>
Total indirect public support	4,669.16
Program service revenue	
Manual sales	1,098.88
Annual meeting fees	2,942.00
Dividends & interest-securities	1,469.79
Miscellaneous revenue	<u>0.23</u>
Total program service revenue	<u>5,510.90</u>
Total income	33,492.58

Expense

Program services	
Certificates & TP cards	370.00
Annual meeting expenses	1,331.45
Landing Strip	3,040.24
Newsletter	1,845.96
Scholarships	475.00
Workshop expenses	-11.29
Fundraising expense	709.51
Promotional materials	<u>750.92</u>
Total program services	8,511.79
Management & general expenses	
Payroll expenses	13,218.80
Payroll taxes	1,149.64
Payroll service fees	1,454.95
Health insurance	5,878.80
Accounting fees	1,930.00
Supplies	193.58
Telephone & telecommunications	2,796.18
Web site	761.26
Printing & copying	112.92
Postage	691.42

Bank service charges	10.00
Rent	600.00
Utilities	346.46
Travel & meetings expenses	360.25
Insurance — liability	630.46
Insurance — Workers' Comp	268.00
Filing fees — N.Y. State	<u>60.00</u>
Total management & general expenses	<u>30,462.72</u>
Total expense	<u>38,974.51</u>
Net ordinary income	-5,481.93
Other income/expense	
Other income	
Unrealized gain (loss)	<u>24,294.11</u>
Total other income	<u>24,294.11</u>
Net other income	<u>24,294.11</u>
Net income	<u>18,812.18</u>

American Friends Service Committee

Representatives to National Corporation

No report submitted.

Middle Atlantic Region

No report submitted.

New York Metropolitan Regional Office

Despite significant cuts in staffing and funding, the New York Regional Office of the AFSC has continued its commitment to bring forth the voices of those who have had little opportunity to be heard in our society. Immigrant Rights, Conflict Resolution, and Healing and Transformative Justice remain important threads in the work of NYMRO. Some of the accomplishments of the last year are the fruit of a momentum already established. In many cases the commitment of staff members over and above what could be expected has resulted in significant achievement. Results have come from a continuous effort to build alliances with other groups with common goals.

The office in Newark, N.J., has continued its advocacy for immigrants' rights. The staff has continued to provide legal services for immigrants. They may represent a child as young as five, a woman fleeing domestic violence, or those seeking asylum from political persecution. In addition, they work to educate communities on issues important to immigrants, such as unpaid wages and police harassment. A resolution passed in March 2010 in the township of Orange, which limited the role of the police in pursuing possible illegal immigrants, was one result of these efforts. Immigrants are encouraged to lobby members of Congress to increase politicians' awareness of the problems they face. To assist public understanding of the issues, the pamphlet *Locked Up but not Forgotten* was prepared by the New York University School of Law Immigrants Rights Clinic in cooperation with the AFSC and NY Advocates for Immigrant Detainees. These programs have been supported by a number of restricted grants. They have emphasized conveying the experiences of immigrants as a mechanism for change.

NYMRO has worked on prison conditions for both immigrants who have been detained as well as those incarcerated for crimes. Is the United States abiding by its commitment to human rights treaties?

The United States is one of the few industrialized nations that uses isolation as a punishment for those who are incarcerated or detained. With the current information on the effects of solitary confinement on those who experience it, the AFSC is raising the question of whether its use constitutes torture. In line with the office's commitment to bring out the voices of those who have not been empowered, the office is updating its 2001 publication *Torture in U.S. Prisons: Evidence of U.S. Human Rights Violations*. The Newark office continues to distribute *Survivors Manual: Survival in Solitary*, a manual written by and for people living in control units. This has been much in demand for distribution to prisoners both in New Jersey and New York. The New York Yearly Meeting Prisons Committee is currently distributing this manual. At this time a single, part-time staff member and a volunteer are continuing the work of this office.

For twenty-five years, there have been reentry services based in the Newark office for those who have been incarcerated. As of October 2009, the Prisoners Resource Center had to be closed and the staff laid off as a result of the budget cuts. This has been a great loss. The issues of reentry, however, have been carried forward in the production of two short educational AFSC films that will be used throughout New Jersey to focus communities attention on the critical absence of housing and on the keys to successful reentry. These videos will be made available to all interested meetings.

Set into place before the cuts was support of the Healing of Memories Institute as part of the Healing and Transformative Justice Program. NYMRO helped to support several workshops, which included members of New York Yearly Meeting and a number of formerly incarcerated men and women. Some limited support this year is enabling workshops to be presented in Mariandale, N.Y., and at the Greenhaven Correctional Facility in conjunction with the Alternatives to Violence Project.

Attention to gun violence in New York City remains the focus of our Conflict Resolution Program along with continued opportunities to partner with communities on the cost of war. For three years NYMRO has been working with the communities in the city where the use of guns is most prevalent—Crown Heights, Harlem, and Mott Haven—in partnership with New Yorkers against Gun Violence. Youth councils have been set up for young people to advocate with city officials to explain why, from their point of view, gun use is so prevalent. The youth have also met with Richard Aborn's organization Citizens Crime Commission of New York City. The hope is to go from the microcosm to a solution. Youth were also involved in creating a 100-foot mural, *Piece Out, Peace In*, at 960 Prospect Place in Crown Heights, Brook-

lyn, a project NYMRO supported in partnership with Groundswell, an organization that supports social change through art.

Most recently NYMRO cosponsored, along with New York Yearly Meeting and many organizations throughout the country, the Truth Commission on Conscience and War at Riverside Church. This event allowed men and women who have been in the military to share their struggles of conscience with regard to fighting a particular war or wars in general.

Efforts in the Healing and Transformative Justice and the Conflict Resolution programs have had to be radically scaled back. Twelve staff members were laid off because of the budget cuts and some employees who retired were not replaced. While these kinds of cuts have not been unusual in the nonprofit world, they have had a major impact on the New York Metropolitan Regional Office of the AFSC. Emotional and financial support of its work, which in many ways supplements and enriches the concerns of New York Yearly Meeting, are goals that NYYM may wish to consider.

Pamela Wood, NYYM liaison to NYMRO

Upper New York State Area Office

AFSC closed this office December 31, 2009.

Barrington Dunbar Fund for Black Development

The Black Development Fund was established in 1969 as the response of New York Yearly Meeting to the needs of the Black and Puerto Rican communities within the area of the Yearly Meeting. As the demographics of the area changed, the committee expanded its mandate to include those whose roots stemmed from the entire Latino Diaspora. The name was changed in 1978 to recognize the work of Barrington Dunbar.

In 2009 the committee granted funds to assist those creating new lives as they returned home from incarceration; helped with educational and recreational resources for incarcerated Black and Latino teens; contributed to community service programs; and assisted with summer camp scholarships for children of migrant farm workers.

The committee carries a special concern in supporting Black and Latino disadvantaged students attending Quaker schools. We have provided funds to support this concern. We have helped individual students in addition to general Quaker school scholarship programs.

The committee would like to make a special request to every monthly meeting throughout NYYM. The charge of the Barrington Dunbar Fund is to reach out to the Black and Hispanic community in an effort to help meet the educational needs of disadvantaged members of that population. We are also charged with assisting grassroots organizations that nurture and support these communities. If your meeting is involved with these efforts in any way, please apply for funds from the Barrington Dunbar Fund for Black Development.

Marvea Thompson, coclerk

Friends Committee for Black Concerns

The Black Concerns Committee is at a crossroads.

For quite some time we supported the research and publication of *Fit for Freedom, Not for Friendship: Quakers, African-Americans and the Myth of Racial Justice*, with committee time, effort, and funds. We also promoted last year's Summer Sessions theme, Equality: Living into the Testimony. We helped with funding so that co-authors, Vanessa Julye and Donna McDaniel, could both be keynotes at Silver Bay. We thought that it was important that there be a Black *and* a White speaker.

We encourage monthly meetings to use the *Fit for Freedom Study Guide*, published by Friends General Conference's Committee for Ministry on Racism. It is filled with quotes, queries, and suggested activities. The guide can be used in meetings, reading groups, or individually. There are also children's activities that can be used for First Day school. You may order the books by visiting www.fitforfreedom.org or contacting Quaker Books at FGC.

We provide *It's Your Life*, published by the AFSC Youth & Militarism Program, for distribution to Black and Latino inner city high schools and neighborhoods. This publication details alternative options to military service. Specific ideas for travel, adventure jobs, youth exchange, skills training, career training and paying for college are all explored. We can really use the help of Friends in distributing this valuable resource. Copies will be available at Silver Bay.

This year we will again sponsor the Racial Healing Worship Group at Silver Bay as well as an interest group given by White Friends Working to End Racism.

Our support for the Bedford Stuyvesant Worship Group, which meets at Redemption Center, continues but we have run into some difficulties. We have had to suspend the worship group temporarily due to building renovations but we hope to resume soon.

We are sponsoring a June 2010 Powell House weekend. Vanessa and Donna will lead us as we look at how we can use our shared learning to transform ourselves, and, ultimately, the Society of Friends. Using the *Fit for Freedom, Not for Friendship* epilogue, "Toward an Inclusive Community," we will plan specific ways to work for racial justice. The goal is to develop steps that can be implemented by individuals and meetings.

We have begun to explore race and ethnicity in the criminal-justice system.

Research suggests that in New York, the criminal-justice system has social, political, and economic features that channel material benefits

from downstate communities of color to upstate white communities. This is often referred to as “the new slavery.” This is compounded by the denial of the right to vote to formerly incarcerated people, and how those imprisoned in New York State are counted in the United States census. Michelle Alexander’s book *The New Jim Crow*, which some have called the *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* of the prison movement, brings all this to light. We began this report by writing that the Black Concerns Committee is at a crossroads. How we as a committee address these issues will determine our direction.

The Black Concerns Committee welcomes the participation and support of concerned Friends in NYYM. If you are interested in working with any of our projects, please contact a committee member.

Helen Garay Toppins, coclerk

Bolivian Quaker Education Fund

During this past year, the Bolivian Quaker Education Fund (BQEF) has entered a new phase of existence. A confluence of events is moving this small institution out of “start-up” mode to a higher programmatic and budgetary plateau. In Bolivia, the organization is now seen locally as an established and solid institution providing valuable services that have changed lives and opened opportunities to Friends from all local yearly meetings.

During this past period of global economic troubles, BQEF initially experienced a fall in revenues. The staff and organization’s board responded with a healthy and thorough review of all the programs, reprioritizing some and creating efficiencies in others. It was a joy to watch how the Bolivian and North American staff creatively sought new and more efficient ways to manage BQEF’s core programs, while finding alternative ways to help raise funds in both Bolivia and the United States.

This past year BQEF’s application to the Bolivian Government for nongovernmental organization (NGO) status was approved and the final stages of this legal process should be completed this year.

The scholarship program continues to be BQEF’s priority program, with over 35 university students assisted this past year. The program has been in existence long enough that the value of the program, as measured by former scholarship students’ contributions to society and the Quaker community, is evident. This year, former scholarship recipients have banded together to cover themselves the cost of one scholarship, demonstrating how receiving an education

can dramatically change a person's economic possibilities.

Alicia Lucasi and Rubén Hilari, who spent last year as interns at Carolina and Oakwood Friends Schools respectively, returned to Bolivia and have contributed substantially to the work and outreach of the BQEF office. They are supporting programs such as scholarships and the internado (boarding home for students) in Sorata, teaching English, facilitating education workshops, helping North American volunteers, and doing plenty of translating. BQEF is making arrangements for another scholarship student, one whose studies focused on agriculture, to spend a year interning at the Meeting School in New Hampshire.

Along with program administrator Bernabé Yujra and a number of other Friends, Alicia and Rubén are dreaming of a model Friends School to bring innovative and values-based education to the Bolivian city of Cochabamba. They are working hard to set the necessary groundwork in place.

Other programs continue apace. The Quaker boarding home recently hired a new administrator, who is working on improving management practices. With the purchase of the building and several years of experience in providing care to children of families who would otherwise experience great difficulty in getting a high school education, the boarding home is becoming a stable presence in Sorata. Alternatives to Violence Project workshops continue with a growing cadre of local facilitators in the cities of La Paz, Cochabamba, and Santa Cruz.

BQEF is excited about its accomplishments despite current challenges and is looking forward to continuing this service work and the relationships that are being built between Bolivian and North American Friends.

Jens Braun, NYYM representative to BQEF

Committee on Conscientious Objection to Paying for War

No report submitted.

Earthcare Working Group

The Earthcare Working Group was taken under the care of Witness Coordinating Committee at Fall Sessions 2009. Subsequently a letter was sent to all clerks of monthly meetings and all clerks of Peace and Social Concerns Committees asking what meetings were doing on earthcare. The response to this letter was very disappointing. Without responses, assessment of what the Earthcare Working Group should focus on was difficult to discern.

A decision was made to focus on earthcare with the Junior Yearly Meeting at Summer Sessions.

At Spring Sessions a Friend suggested instead of forming an Earthcare Working Group, we may wish to provide a resource for the Yearly Meeting on earthcare, and to share ideas from monthly meetings. *InfoShare* and *Spark* could be used for these purposes. Perhaps there will be some clarity at Summer Sessions as to how we should move forward with this important concern.

Patricia Chernoff, clerk

Friends Committee on National Legislation representatives

The Friends Committee on National Legislation, the oldest and largest registered religious lobby in Washington, is a nonpartisan Quaker lobby in the public interest. FCNL works with a nationwide network of tens of thousands of people from every state in the U.S. to advocate for social and economic justice, peace, and protection of the environment.

More than 170 Quakers from 39 states gathered in Washington, D.C., in early November 2009, to plan their work for 2010 and discuss strategies for further strengthening FCNL to realize the historic opportunities for policy change in Washington. In spite of mass media reports of government gridlock, FCNL staff report important initiatives in Washington on issues central to FCNL priorities.

A top White House official, congressional staff, and FCNL lobbyists emphasized that, in the next two years, Congress could put the United States back on the road toward nuclear disarmament, invest more money in tools to peacefully prevent deadly conflict, and advance many other issues of concern to the FCNL network. The challenge, explained FCNL Executive Secretary Joe Volk, is how to mobilize people around the country to provide the lobbying and financial support that will be necessary to realize these goals.

The FCNL Annual Meeting is the annual gathering of its General Committee, made up of Quakers appointed by 26 yearly meetings and several dozen individual Friends chosen because they are particularly active on lobby issues. NYYM appoints six (6) representatives to FCNL, whose principal responsibility is to attend the annual meeting in Washington and help make decisions about FCNL's goals and operations. Other interested Friends, who are not appointed representatives, but may be on various FCNL committees, attend as well.

Keynote speaker Sayyid M. Syeed, a Muslim leader, described the evolution of the Islamic Society of North America during the last three decades. As national director of the Office for Interfaith and Community Alliances at the society, Sayeed discussed his work building alliances with other faith communities. Participants in the Annual Meeting approved an epistle encouraging Quakers to engage with American Muslims. "If we stand together to practice equality and justice," the epistle affirms, "we can enhance our understanding of American Muslims and theirs of us and raise American Muslim visibility in a positive way, which is of special importance to Muslim youth. This would encourage similar efforts by others, help amplify American Muslim voices, and make our education of the public and policy advocacy more effective."

Always a high point of the annual conference, the nine interns described the personal journeys that led them to work at FCNL and some details of their involvement in issues such as immigration, nuclear disarmament, and peaceful prevention of deadly conflict. With a reduction in regular staff over the past year due to budget constraints, interns have assumed an even more important role in the daily lobbying and office work of FCNL.

Meeting participants were introduced to the search committee for a new executive secretary. Joe Volk will be retiring in March 2011 after 20 years in the position. Friends left the annual meeting more than ever aware of the important contribution Joe Volk has made and the necessity of supporting FCNL through program work and financial contribution. An immediate project for yearly meeting representatives is to involve monthly meetings in consideration of priorities that will guide FCNL work in the 112th Congress. This bi-yearly process will be completed with the Policy Committee's submission of priorities for approval at the 2010 annual meeting.

We seek a world free of war and the threat of war
We seek a society with equality and justice for all
We seek a community where every person's potential
may be fulfilled
We seek an earth restored.

Jonathan Collett, clerk, FCNL representatives

Friends Peace Teams representatives

Friends Peace Teams (FPT) is a Spirit-led organization working around the world to develop long-term relationships with communities in conflict to create programs for peace building, healing, and reconciliation. FPT's programs build on extensive Quaker experience combining practical and spiritual aspects of conflict resolution. The purpose of Friends Peace Teams is to invite, challenge, and empower individual Friends and Friends churches and meetings to participate in Spirit-led peace team work locally and internationally.

Peace Teams are groups of people working together in places and times of conflict for reconciliation, justice, and the promotion of non-violence. It uses processes and methods that respect individuals and help conflicting groups through such programs as the Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP), trauma healing, community reconciliation, and peace education. All of these programs bring together people or groups-in-conflict from different ethnic, political, gender, religious,

and/or other conflicting groups.

Currently Friends Peace Teams has three initiatives supported by working groups: Peacebuilding en las Américas (PLA) with a presence in Bogotá and on the northern coast of Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Honduras; the Indonesian Initiative (II) working in Aceh, North Sumatra, West Java, and Central Java; and the African Great Lakes Initiative (AGLI) collaborating with partners in Burundi, eastern Congo, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda.

Peacebuilding en las Américas promotes peace and healing in countries where the violent legacy of civil war has added to the continued poverty and injustice that sparked the conflicts. Crime, gang violence, and continued political problems have compelled Quakers and others to seek new solutions. Working alongside local partner organizations, PLA offers AVP workshops and trainings and prepares local volunteers to lead them. PLA also practices community-based trauma healing work modeled on the Healing and Rebuilding Our Communities (HROC) program developed originally by Friends Peace Teams' African partners. More recently they have begun bringing trained trauma healers from Colombia to Central America to train others. Over the past year PLA has been developing connections with the nonviolent Resistance Front in Honduras, which became more known when they mounted a massive, nonviolent protest against the military coup in June 2009, but has a history of organizing to protect workers', women's, and small farmers' rights.

The Indonesian Initiative seeks to connect communities of conscience between the U.S. and Indonesia, working with human rights defenders, "conflict refugees" and teachers of young children who do not support violence and war. II has introduced AVP and trauma healing workshops into communities traumatized by war and inter-religious violence. They are supporting several early education schools with workshops on developmental play, scholarships for teacher education, and school supplies. II also nurtures delegations and people-to-people friendships.

One fruit of the people-to-people friendship is the impact on the Barak Induk refugee camp. Seven hundred families of mostly Javanese farmers were run out of Aceh during the war. They believed they were living on UN protected land, a misconception the government used to collude with wealthy individuals logging and planting palm oil plantations on the land. Consequently, these displaced people were unrecognized by the government and not receiving any government services. In this tenuous circumstance they were afraid to build, plant, or invest for fear of being driven out at any time. The circle of Friends

associated with II were able to locate information and get verification that the people were living outside of the protected land boundary. Once the information was made public, the government agreed to work things out. Baruk Induk was formally annexed to a nearby village.

Nadine Hoover (Alfred Meeting) coordinates II and carries with her a travel minute from NYYM, which will be reviewed by Friends at NYYM Sessions at Silver Bay this year. Her spiritual companions and monthly meeting have seen clear to release her to write and travel full-time in the coming year.

The African Great Lakes Initiative strengthens, supports, and promotes peace activities at the grassroots level in the Great Lakes region of Africa. To this end AGLI responds to requests from local religious and nongovernmental organizations that focus on conflict management, peace building, trauma healing, and reconciliation. In Burundi and Rwanda AGLI has brought together Hutu and Tutsi survivors and perpetrators of genocide for AVP and HROC workshops and trained local facilitators to carry on the work. It is supporting work with survivors of rape in North Kivu Province of eastern Congo. It has a long-term relationship supporting the Friends Women's Association Clinic in Kamenge, Burundi. It is providing support to the Bududa Vocational Institute in Uganda. It provides opportunities for work campers and extended service volunteers that have ranged from helping to build a peace center to grant writing to mediation training to giving workshops on small scale gardening.

Currently the Healing and Rebuilding Our Communities program in Burundi is in the midst of an Election Violence Prevention Program for the five elections between May 21 and September 7. As part of a grant from the United States Institute of Peace, HROC has formed Democracy and Peace groups in nine volatile communities in four provinces of Burundi. Each group has 80 participants who have received the basic HROC workshop and follow-up training to unite disparate people into cohesive groups that will work together to prevent violence during the elections in their community.

As an add-on to this project, AGLI decided to implement an Early Warning System with 100 to 400 of these participants who will be called "citizen reporters." Each will have a cell phone with unlimited calling and text messaging with everyone else in the system for the five months from May through September. When an incident develops in a community, the citizen reporters will be able to contact the call-in center in Bujumbura to report events as they occur. Then, if advisable, the citizen reporters and others from the Democracy and Peace group can come to observe the incident. Observation frequently is what keeps people from perpetrating violent acts. Moreover, conflicts frequently

occur as rumors spread, and the citizen reporters will be trained on how to give verifiable reports. These reports will be analyzed at the call-in center and forwarded to Quaker policy organizations throughout the world.

Friends Peace Teams Council conducts business primarily through a monthly conference call and by e-mail. There is one annual face-to-face meeting. This year it was hosted by Tampa and St. Petersburg Friends Meetings April 22–26. It was an opportunity for working groups to report on their activities, discuss common concerns, and identify possible opportunities for collaboration.

Care is taken to keep administrative costs low. It is estimated that 7.5% of Friends Peace Teams funds are used for administration including book-keeping, fund transfers, publication of *PeaceWays*, and Web site maintenance. To learn more about Friends Peace Teams activities, visit www.friendspeaceteams.org.

Susan Nowelsky and Greta Mickey, coclerks

Committee on Indian Affairs

This past year Liseli Haines (Mohawk Valley) called the Baltimore office of American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) because she wanted to volunteer in some way. They connected her with the American Friends Service Committee in Syracuse, the office that worked with the Akwesasne reservation. There she spoke with Chrissie Rizzo, director of the Upper New York State Area AFSC office, who suggested she begin to do work with the Akwesasne Reservation, a Mohawk community that spans the New York-Canada border. As a result, she volunteered to organize and lead a work trip to one of the annual events with 12 youth and Chrissie. The young people were then invited by the Akwesasne elders to visit during the Apple Harvest in September. They would be hosted in homes and work on whatever projects the elders asked them to do.

I am sorry to report that the trip, which had such great possibilities of inter-visitation, had to be canceled. Beginning in June, Akwesasne experienced a real crisis when the Canadian government insisted on arming its border guards with Beretta 8 mm guns. When the Mohawk people protested, Canada withdrew the guards and closed the bridge from Cornwall Island to mainland Canada. With no traffic passing through the highway, U.S. Customs closed the bridge from Cornwall Island to New York. People living on the island were forced to use boats to travel to and from their homes and jobs, and non-Native

people could no longer cross the border to the island.

The other reason for cancellation was that the AFSC office was in serious financial crisis and had to lay down its programs, lay off its staff, and close its doors. The Akwesasne Environmental Task Force (ATFE) welcomed Chrissie's offer to introduce them to Friends who carry concerns for Native peoples. Our committee had minuted a wish to find a way forward so that the ATFE could continue their projects with black-ash basket making, the apple orchard, the Earth Day Celebration, the invasive plant project, and the tree/seed giveaway. In December, Susan Wolf (Ithaca Meeting) traveled with Chrissie to meet members of the ATFE and establish ties, so that now we can begin to work with them directly. Perhaps there will be a youth project in the future? Apparently time will tell.

A Native American Mohawk incarcerated at Sing Sing Correctional Facility wrote a letter that was forwarded to us this past year. He acts as Native American Longhouse facilitator there. He is working to provide motivation and instruction to the men. In this group some are St. Regis Mohawk, some are Taíno (an aboriginal Arawakan people of the Caribbean). He wishes to have people come in to hear them sing and would like guidance to strengthen the group's direction and path. They want to be able to practice their religions as well as their languages, tribal songs, and traditional dances. He is also looking for VCR movies about Native peoples, a set of maracas, a small turtle rattle, horn rattles, a hand drum, and a small multi-reed flute from Peru. If anyone has any of these items that they might want to donate for this purpose, please let our committee know. We would greatly appreciate it. Matt Scanlon (Scarsdale Meeting) and Bill Bortree (Scarsdale Meeting) are this man's Quaker contacts. We will make outreach to other Yearly Meeting committees that may have been contacted, so we can coordinate donation efforts. Susan Wolf will be the contact person.

Anita Murphy has just informed us about the Onondaga Community College Foundation's choice for the (2010–2011) Marjorie Sexton Memorial Scholarship. We look forward to meeting Kyla Powers over lunch in Syracuse in the near future.

The Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Indian Committee sent our committee an epistle in the spring, and we have been in communication with them ever since. They, in turn, are in active contact with Baltimore Yearly Meeting Indian Affairs Committee, the FCNL Advocacy program and many others interested in Native peoples' issues. We look forward to meeting these Quakers who are so well-informed and constantly learning and sharing so much information.

Our stipend program continues for Native American students who

either live in or attend college in the geographical area of New York Yearly Meeting. We are helping the American Indian Community House in Manhattan complete a new educational program giving students tutoring for GED preparation and remedial assistance for college entrance exams. We look forward to planning a 2010 committee retreat (at Tom Porter's Mohawk community, Kanatsiohareke, near Fonda, New York) which will be open to all interested Yearly Meeting folks.

We approached the monthly meetings in NYYM with a brief questionnaire about whether they would like to receive e-mail bulletins on Native events, issues, and concerns. Several meetings have asked to receive these, and many responded indicating various recurring concerns. What is going on in your area with Native Americans? We would like to hear about your work and encourage you in your endeavors. We welcome information from your meetings and hope to provide information helpful to you.

Sybil Perry, clerk

National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund & Peace Tax Foundation

The National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund (NCPTF) is a non-profit organization based in Washington, D.C., that advocates for passage of the Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund Bill (currently H.R. 2085). When enacted, this law will protect the rights of citizens whose conscience does not permit physical or financial participation in war. Federal taxes of designated conscientious objectors will be placed in a nonmilitary trust fund, enabling these citizens to be free from spiritual bondage, increasing federal revenue, and restoring the balance of government between collective security and noninterference in an individual's free exercise of belief. The NCPTF functions as a lobbying organization and is classified as a 501(c)4 nonprofit organization, so contributions to it are not tax-deductible.

The Peace Tax Foundation seeks to conduct research and inform the public about the concept of freedom of conscience, including the religious, ethical, and historical bases for conscientious objection to war. It researches and educates citizens about the concept of alternative tax payment programs based upon conscientious objection to military preparations. The Foundation also serves as a liaison to the international peace tax movement. The Foundation does not lobby and it is a 501(c)3 organization, so donations made to it are tax-deductible.

As the Yearly Meeting representative did not submit a report for last

year's *Yearbook*, this report will cover developments at the NCPTF and Foundation since May 2008. On April 23, 2009, Representative John Lewis (GA-05), along with ten cosponsors, introduced the Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund Bill as H.R. 2085 in the 111th Congress. It was referred to the House Committee on Ways and Means. The bill currently has 18 cosponsors. The text of H.R. 2085 and links to information about the bill's status in the House of Representatives are available at www.peacetaxfund.org/thebill/. The NCPTF's current work focuses on gathering additional cosponsors.

Melani Hom, who was serving as interim director in early 2008, was succeeded by permanent executive director Bethany Criss in autumn 2008. Bethany is the sole employee of the NCPTF and the Peace Tax Foundation. In addition to lobbying representatives, sending out the newsletter (which has switched from paper to electronic format), seeking financial support for the NCPTF and Foundation, and running the day-to-day operations of both organizations, Bethany is also working on a video called *I Am the Face of Conscientious Objection*. This short video will feature conscientious objectors diverse in age, race, gender, and religion, encouraging individuals to identify with and see themselves in the faces of those interviewed. It will be posted to NCPTF's Web site as well as Facebook, MySpace, and YouTube, and will complement the message conveyed by NCPTF's longer 12-minute video, *Compelled by Conscience*, which is available as a DVD from the NCPTF online store, https://salsa.democracyinaction.org/o/192/t/9482/shop/shop.jsp?storefront_KEY=18, and includes additional interviews about the NCPTF.

Rick Woodward, who has been a conscientious objector to paying military tax since 2004, is the current chair. Rick started a campaign in May 2009 to broaden the NCPTF's base of support. The campaign's ultimate goal is to find at least two individuals in every U.S. representative's district who will contact their representative on a monthly basis in support of the bill. These individuals will also provide a modest amount of financial support to the NCPTF. Seventy-four particularly strategic districts are currently being targeted (out of 435 total districts). Some individuals who played this grassroots activist role in the past have renewed their commitment. Board members conducted visits with potentially supportive religious denominations (Presbyterian, Episcopalian, Methodist, and Catholic) to ask for collaboration and to seek information about reaching individuals in those churches who might be interested.

Every April the NCPTF organizes a lobby day in Washington to visit representatives' offices and discuss with them the importance of signing on to the Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund Bill. Discourag-

ingly, only one of the 19 individuals who had committed to attending the most recent lobby day in April 2010 showed up, causing the day to be canceled. It will be rescheduled for August or September 2010.

We are actively searching for new board members for the NCPTF and are pleased that one new member from the Mennonite Church USA has joined its board. The Foundation is also looking for new board members; we welcome referrals to individuals you think may be interested in serving on either board.

Due to reduction in the level of contributions over the past two years, the NCPTF and Peace Tax Fund have had to cut costs and human resources significantly. We are deeply in need of support during this difficult time. Please consider making a personal or meeting donation to the NCPTF. It is very important that we keep this legislation active so that the pressing need for legal protection of freedom of conscience remains at the forefront of legislators' awareness.

Lily Dalke, NYYM representative

National Religious Campaign against Torture

See Torture Awareness Working Group.

New Jersey Council of Churches

No report submitted.

New York State Council of Churches Chaplaincy

No report submitted.

New York State Council of Churches Collegium

The New York State Council of Churches (NYSCC) currently has ten member denominations, all in the Protestant tradition, with about 6,000 congregations. A major aspect of the council's work is certifying and supporting Protestant chaplains in state agencies, particularly the

prisons. Another aspect is discerning commonly held public policy concerns and serving as the “Church in the Public Arena” by advocating for those concerns with lawmakers. Since 2001, the council’s governing body, the Collegium, has undertaken two legislative trips a year—one to Albany and the other to Washington, D.C., where it appears to be the only state church council to do so. Over the years, ongoing relationships with legislators and their staffs have been building trust and opening possibilities for meaningful conversations.

Through corporate discernment starting this past fall, three concerns arose: peace, poverty, and immigration (experience having taught that it’s best to focus deeply on a few concerns). In May fifteen members of the Collegium or their representatives made the trip to D.C. A day of briefings from church advocacy groups—including Friends Committee on National Legislation—was followed by two days of sessions on Capitol Hill with staff and the occasional legislator.

In one representative’s opinion, meaningful immigration reform will not happen this year, with this congress—and it’s likely that the next Congress will be more conservative, so the window may be closing.

When we voiced strong concerns about sanctions the day after the U.S., China, and Russia had announced an agreement on sanctions against Iran, we were met with some silence, and with some interesting conversations. When we proposed long-term strategies for strengthening people-to-people relations, rather than deploying sanctions that historically have hurt the underclass, legislators’ eyes did not light up with excitement.

One representative talked about his sense of generational shifts: that for young people, homosexuality is a political non-issue, and that young Jews increasingly feel that Israel is conducting an immoral occupation of another people. These shifts are not idealism, but a core understanding and experience of the world.

In response to being asked what we can be doing back home, various staffers shared the following suggestions:

We need to raise youth with an awareness of the possibilities of prophetic witness and advocacy. We need to bring them into the process.

The best thing we can do regarding the Israel-Palestine conflict is to engage in dialogue with local rabbis and synagogues.

It’s helpful to legislators to hear both public discourse (i.e., letters to the editor) and direct e-mail contact regarding concerns.

When the Collegium gathers, we share our sense of trends in our denominations, where memberships and donations are down, and

congregations are engaging in a process of reevaluation. In community outreach, churches are aware of the problem of providing *services for* rather than *relationships with* people in need. Church leaders feel a tension between being principled and being practical, both in witness work and in other aspects of church life.

On a personal note, serving with the council provides a connection with people from other Protestant churches that has been sometimes frustrating and always illuminating. There is inevitably strong interest in talking about Quaker faith and practice—people are very knowledgeable about us, and quite fascinated! They often express gratitude for the Quaker presence in helping the group to stay centered and grounded, and to remember why we gather and the Source of the work we strive to do.

Heather M. Cook, representative to the Collegium

Peace Concerns coordinator

As I live into the vision that Witness Coordinating Committee shares for a Peace Concerns coordinator I find myself invigorated and uplifted by the work. Over the last year I have traveled to speak and worship with quarters and regions and monthly meetings and to learn of what is being done throughout our Yearly Meeting as we strive to live into our peace testimony. For me much of the work is in listening and making connections. This is the work that was envisioned for a Peace Concerns coordinator and it is an incredible privilege to be able to carry it.

There are conversations to be had and questions to ask as we delve deeper into our own understanding of the peace testimony and what that means for ourselves as individuals and, as parts of the whole of humanity. I work to lift them up whenever possible. Questions like: What is peace? Is it possible? I often find myself relating pieces of my experience of the three years that I stood vigil in Rhinebeck, New York. Each Sunday evening from 5:30 to 6:30 I stood at the largest intersection in town. I usually stood alone holding a large sign that read “Silent Vigil for World Peace” and “under the care of Bullshead-Oswego Monthly Meeting (Quakers).” The most common thing that I heard was first, affirmation: “Wouldn’t world peace be wonderful?” followed by “But of course it will never happen.” I would find myself explaining that the first step was to believe that world peace is possible. To believe that peace is possible means that we must believe that we can find the way to individual and corporate justice and equality. I am grateful to be able to walk with Friends throughout New York Yearly

Meeting as we find the path and way opens.

As I write this a questionnaire from me has reached monthly meetings, worship groups, and preparative meetings asking for information about what individual Friends and meetings are doing in their work for peace. Responses have just begun to reach me. It will be exciting to know in more detail how our peace testimony touches us and moves us to action. I look forward to hearing from you all and to having a page on our new Yearly Meeting Web site where we can all find and make connections with others doing like work.

Greta Mickey, Peace Concerns coordinator

Prisons Committee

Do all the good you can,
By all the means you can,
In all the ways you can,
In all the places you can,
At all the times you can,
To all the people you can,
As long as ever you can.

John Wesley

This year we wanted you to hear the voices of those involved in prison ministry: the voices of those living in prisons who are members of our prison worship groups and voices of those living outside the prison who go behind the walls to worship.

Voices across the Walls

“The Quaker presence is much appreciated by the men.”

“Prison worship groups continue to wrestle with racial strife and gang violence in a Quaker way.”

“Attica was a little over 30 years ago. For all we complain about now, the fact is that prison conditions are much better now than 30 years ago. Change is possible. Don’t give up. The changes we want are logical, humane and right. This is an unbeatable combination.”

“What will this place look like and be like in 30 years? If there are to be changes, who will make them, who will be the first? It seems certain that this prison worship group and others like it have the information and the energy to begin this work.”

“Those of us in this Quaker meeting usually have interesting discussions when we ponder the queries for the State of the Meeting Report. This year we found that although some of the queries were less applicable to a prison meeting, we had informative discussion on the topics of overcoming racism...and our vision for the future. The query about racism elicited various responses. Several noted that we are more Caucasian than the general prison population. In the past, we have had more Latino and African American brothers among us. Some wondered if we are as welcoming as we could be. One person said Quaker worship was “not for everyone although everyone is welcome.” A counter query was proposed by one member: “If Jesus preached to criminals, was convicted as a criminal and died next to other criminals, why is it currently so acceptable among so many Christians to hate criminals?”

“I am writing this letter to inform you that I am now at a prison that does not have a Quaker worship group or any type of literature dealing with the Quaker Religious Society of Friends. Why that is I don’t know. So I was wondering if it is possible could you send me anything like that and maybe a motto calendar. Also if you could, could you send my regards to the volunteers and inmates in my old Quaker prison worship group.”

Have been thinking about the report for Prisons Committee, no great quotes, just a real clear message that our service to the people inside is deepening as we see with the passing of time that though we don’t want to see it, people are dying in prison. How do we as Quakers meet their spiritual needs as they face old age, illness, loss of family? How do we work with the Department of Corrections to maintain our spiritual relationships with those members of our worship groups when they become ill and go to the hospital? Also, how does this tie into being a member of a prison worship group if one is not a registered member?

You will say, “I am only one. I can’t do it.” But you must try.

As the baby boomer prison population ages, the number of chronically ill patients is on the rise. I worry about those chronically ill or dying in prison hospitals when their admission isolates them from their worship group. They want Quaker visits and/or meeting for worship in their hospital room, especially before they die. It can be a challenge to arrange for deathbed visits or organize a prison hospital meeting for worship.

A few years ago the Interfaith Movement for Criminal Justice Reform issued a call to people of all faiths to affirm the following principles:

- Criminal acts have consequences, including incarceration if needed.
- Acknowledge the God-given capacity for redemption that lives in all human beings.
- Focus on rehabilitation, not punishment or revenge.
- Help offenders work toward repentance and taking responsibility for their crime.
- Act with compassion, forgiving and fostering healing, without confusing forgiveness with acceptance of the crime.
- Fairness. The rule of law must be applied equally to all regardless of race, class, gender, or income level.

Those that worship with us behind the walls tell us that Quaker prison meetings provide a safe haven and a foundation for positive life changes. If you would like to visit a Quaker prison meeting to share how the Spirit is moving in your life, or to participate regularly at a worship group, please contact us. **The Prisons Committee needs you!**

Jolene Festa and Helen Garay Toppins, coclerks

Committee for Right Sharing of World Resources

Right Sharing of World Resources (RSWR) has a point person, rather than a committee, representing it at NYYM. The Yearly Meeting's contributions to RSWR are made from the Sharing Fund, and in 2009 a total of \$6,415.62 was contributed.

Right Sharing of World Resources, Inc., is an entirely Quaker organization. Although donations from non-Quakers are not refused, our outreach is aimed at Quakers of all persuasions in the United States. In this way, RSWR serves as a bridge among the various branches of Quakerism. Its board is composed of Quakers from across the country and across the Quaker spectrum.

The mission of RSWR is two-fold: to empower North American Friends to examine their lives and lifestyles in the light of our testimonies, and to partner with small organizations (NGOs) in India and Africa who are working with the poorest of the poor to improve their lives. Our partners in Kenya, Rwanda, and Burundi are all Quakers, usually United Society of Friends Women groups or monthly meeting groups. Our work in India is limited to the state of Tamil Nadu, in the southeast tip of the subcontinent, and a small adjacent area in Andra Pradesh, the next state north. We also have some projects in Sierra Leone.

All of our projects include income-generating activities, usually based on a micro-credit model. However, the work of our partner organizations includes much more than simply making loans, because the recipients of these loans need much training and support before they can use the money productively. Nearly all the recipients of loans are women, and an increasing number of the NGOs are headed and run by women.

To learn more about this work, and to subscribe to a newsletter (either paper or online), please visit www.RSWR.org, or write to Right Sharing of World Resources, 101 Quaker Hill Drive, Richmond, IN 47374.

Mary Eagleson, resource person

Rural and Migrant Ministry

Rural and Migrant Ministry (RMM) is a multifaith organization which, since 1981, has served disenfranchised rural residents and agricultural workers in New York State through programs of education, witness, advocacy, youth empowerment, and leadership development. New York Yearly Meeting became an RMM Covenanting Denomination in 2001, joining 10 other New York communities of faith in supporting the work of the Ministry morally, institutionally, and financially. At its most basic, institutional support consists of NYYM representation on the RMM board of directors, and an annual financial contribution.

The mission of RMM, “to overcome the prejudices and poverty that degrade and debilitate all members of our society, by building communities that celebrate diversity, achieve true mutuality, and offer dignity and opportunity to all,” is primarily accomplished in three program areas: Youth Empowerment (The Youth Arts Group, summer camps, Leadership Institutes, mentoring, etc.); Education (educational immersion programs, internships, forums, workshops, the Pedro Cruz Scholarship Fund); Accompaniment (the Justice for Farmworkers campaign, Delegations to meet and talk with farmworkers, legislative advocacy, litigation).

Following are a few of the many and diverse activities and accomplishments of RMM over the past year:

- Over 200 children, ages 8 to 18, participated in the free summer day camps in five Hudson Valley counties, and the 20th annual week-long Leadership Camp was held from August 23 –29, with a special performance by Arm-of-the-Sea Mask and

Puppet Theatre on August 26th, and a Reunion Dinner for all former campers on the 28th.

- An RMM Leadership Academy, Preparing for Life after High School, was held at Vassar College on August 17th.
- The Sowing Seeds for Justice Dinner, a celebration and fundraiser, was held at Riverside Church in New York City on November 12th, with Kerry Kennedy, founder of the Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Center for Human Rights, among the honorees.
- Destiny, RMM's annual Rural Women's Conference, was held December 4th and 5th in Binghamton. NYS Senator Diane Savino, Millie Johnson, executive director of Govans Economic Management Senate, and Dr. Roja Singh of the Dalit Solidarity Forum were the featured speakers.
- The Youth Arts Group (YAG) held an Art-a-Thon on April 24th in Middletown, creating art pieces for ten straight hours focusing on issues affecting teens, such as racism, violence, poverty, immigration, education, and human rights. The event was a fundraiser for YAG.
- A Walk-a-Thon, to raise money for the 2010 Leadership camp, will be held on June 5th at St. James Episcopal Church, Hyde Park.
- The Justice for Farmworkers Campaign, of which RMM is a prime sponsor and organizer, worked throughout the year to bring the Farm Workers Fair Labor Practices Act (S.2247/A.1867), which has been repeatedly passed by the NYS Assembly over many years, to the floor of the Senate for a vote. The Act would grant farmworkers many of the labor law rights and protections covering other workers but denied to farmworkers since the 1930s. After a promise by the State Senate Democratic leader, John Sampson, to bring the bill up for a vote, it was buried in the Agriculture Committee, which has no jurisdiction. The Campaign continues.

Friends who might be interested in or feel called to the work of the Rural and Migrant Ministry, and would consider appointment to the Ministry's board as a representative of the Yearly Meeting, should contact the NYYM Nominating Committee, or James O'Barr at jobarr@hrhcare.org.

James O'Barr, NYYM representative

Torture Awareness Working Group

The Torture Awareness Working Group has continued to follow the progress of the National Religious Campaign against Torture (NRCAT) by participating in monthly conference calls as the representatives on behalf of New York Yearly Meeting. NRCAT continues to actively lobby legislators and the president for a Commission of Inquiry to investigate the roots of our nation's policy regarding torture, with the goal of ending torture forever. We hope that individual meetings are connecting with the National Religious Campaign's Web site (www.NRCAT.org) regularly for actions they can participate in.

We are disappointed that President Obama has not yet closed the Guantanamo detention facility as he had promised at the time of his inauguration. Approximately 200 detainees remain in the facility at this time. Many of them have been cleared for release, but our nation's current policy toward Yemen (because of its suspected involvement with terrorism) has prevented their release.

As we write this, we are hoping individual meetings are planning activities to mark June as Torture Awareness Month as in past years. There is still much work to be done to end torture in U.S. detention facilities and in the world at large.

We are heartened by a new initiative on the part of NRCAT to investigate torture in U.S. prisons. We are particularly concerned about the effects of isolation on the mental and physical health of affected prisoners.

After a year's sabbatical, John Calvi (Putney, VT, Meeting), who was instrumental in initiating the two QUIT (Quaker Initiative to End Torture) conferences in North Carolina, is back at work to end torture. A fall conference is being planned for September 24–26 at Quaker Center in Ben Lomond, California. John will be a guest at our NYYM Summer Sessions in 2010.

Patricia Chernoff, Fred Dettmer, Anita Paul

William Penn House

William Penn House (WPH) is a dynamic Quaker presence on Capitol Hill, where they hold the only daily Quaker meeting for worship.

WPH is an example to the community of what one can do to help the environment. Their rain garden (“rainscape”) absorbs water cleanly into the ground, rather than allowing it to run through streets and sewers where it would pick up pollution that would end up in Anacostia River. Staff are currently working with a private middle school student group to help them build a rainscape on the school grounds. Other community projects will be undertaken in the future. The next project for the William Penn House property is “greening” the coach house.

Washington Quaker Workcamps, a vital part of WPH, will sponsor a new workcamp this summer to explore the relationship of Friends and Native Americans. It will take place over three weeks in Pine Ridge, S.D., and Washington, D.C. Workcamps have focused on many issues, some of which are homelessness, affordable housing, health and healthcare, HIV/AIDS, racial and sexual equality, and the environment.

WPH has worked hard to nurture leadership and leadings among younger Friends. The average age of the staff is 34 and dropping. The Hospitality and Workcamp coordinators are in their mid-twenties. Five members of the board of directors are 30 or younger. Staff are periodically released to participate in Friends gatherings and leadership development, with their travel and registration costs paid.

As always, WPH strives to find new ways of supporting Friends in their endeavors to make this a more peaceful and greener world. A new project this year is to provide a Gap Year Program for a recent high school graduate to work at William Penn House.

I have been the NYYM representative to the William Penn House Consultative Committee for the past six years. It has been a pleasure and an education to serve you in this capacity. I hope that many of you will consider attending WPH programs, and/or using their hospitality when in the D.C. area. You will be enriched by the experience. Visit the WPH Web site at www.williampennhouse.org.

Ronald Inskip, William Penn House representative

Committee on World Ministries

The World Ministries Committee (WMC) continues to spend time and effort wondering how to cope with the problems and opportunities of the 21st century. The issues have to do not only with meetings and records, but also with mission and policy.

More than a year ago it became clear that the WMC's business could not be conducted effectively at NYYM sessions. Too many members of the committee are also members of other committees, and as a result a quorum was almost never present for a meeting. Having meetings at another time and place was deemed too awkward, and incompatible with earthcare witness. WMC has therefore decided to meet by teleconference. While it is surprisingly tricky to find a time agreeable to all for an hour on the phone, the process does seem to be working.

WMC met in June 2009 and approved six requests totaling \$11,300. The committee had an informal meeting (without a quorum) at Fall Sessions in November 2009 and was unable to schedule a teleconference meeting at the end of the year, so the next formal meeting was postponed until February 2010.

Meetings in conjunction with sessions will, however, not be dropped altogether. Even though they are not practical for decision-making, they do provide an opportunity for grant recipients to describe their work in detail, and members of WMC who are able to attend profit greatly from such meetings. WMC is now considering having a display at sessions, to supplement or perhaps replace meetings at sessions.

Meeting by teleconference creates new challenges about the distribution of requests and reports. In the past applicants have brought hard copies of these documents. Teleconferencing means that the documents need to be distributed electronically and that WMC needs a software system for storing them and having ready access to them. We are working on that.

Having documents in electronic form means that some of our work can be posted on the NYYM Web site. Paul Busby informs us that there is plenty of space, and we hope to be able to begin posting material by the end of the year.

One more thing we have done has been to approve a statement of our mission, policies, and procedures. Friends should bear in mind that it is still a work in progress and still needs seasoning by the Witness Coordinating Committee. To that end, any comments or suggestions Friends have may be sent to the clerks of WMC and to the clerk of WCC.

Mission, policies, and procedures

The WMC, working with funds from bequests and the Sharing Fund, supports the ministry of NYYM Friends in the wider world. Persons or organizations applying for funds should write to us with a sense of ministry, that is, with a vision of what is to be done in order to spread the Quaker message of love in the wider world. Persons with such visions should be members of NYYM, or the vision should be shared and endorsed by a meeting or organization within NYYM.

Funds available are between \$20,000 and \$25,000 annually. In considering the applications, WMC will focus on whether the proposed work is ministry, and also whether it is in the wider world. Nonetheless there is a recognition that it is difficult to distinguish firmly and definitively between ministry and administration, or between ministry and service/development, and similarly difficult to distinguish between the wider world and pockets of oppression/poverty in the U.S.

Applications should be by letter, preferably electronic, to the clerk of the committee. The letter should say specifically what the funds are needed for; for this purpose a budget, including information about other sources of funding, is expected. Each application should designate someone as the main contact person for the project, and this person must have a specific connection to NYYM, usually through individual membership, and must accept responsibility for stewardship of any funds granted to the project.

Applications received by the clerk will be acknowledged and then distributed to members of WMC at least a week prior to scheduled meetings, electronically.

WMC plans to meet in May and November, normally by teleconference, to approve grants. When grants are formally approved, the clerk of WMC will notify the recipients of the action, state that checks can be expected within six weeks, and ask that they acknowledge receipt of the checks when received.

WMC needs to know how the funds are used. Therefore about nine months after the checks are sent out, the clerk will write to those recipients who have not yet sent in reports, requesting an update on where they are in the use of the funds received. Applicants will not receive further grants until reports are received.

Newton Garver and Susan Weisfeld, coclerks

Liaison Committee

The Liaison Committee meets once a month by telephone to consider what is coming to the Yearly Meeting through the four sections (Ministry, General Services, Nurture, and Witness) and to reflect on the sense of the life of the meeting. The committee provides an opportunity for the Yearly Meeting clerk, assistant clerk, clerks of coordinating committees, and general secretary to share concerns and offer each other support and guidance, and to season whatever may come forward. It's quite a blessing!

In addition, we have been meeting in person to consider the charge from Fall Sessions to "propose a process to guide the Yearly Meeting in discerning who we are, how we are led, and how we support the work of those leadings and needs." Friends from around the Yearly Meeting joined us in this work, which has been surprising in its movement. At this writing in mid-May, the work continues.

The committee looks forward to meeting in person every morning of Summer Sessions, and hopes to have the added benefit of taking time together for worship sharing in the afternoon.

Heather M. Cook, clerk