

**Silver Bay, New York**  
**Sunday, July 23, 2017; 6:45 p.m.**

*Lucinda Antrim (Scarsdale), Clerk*  
*Jeffrey Aaron (New Brunswick), Assistant Clerk*  
*Karen Way (New Brunswick), Recording Clerk*  
*Elaine Learnard (Conscience Bay), Reading Clerk*

2017-07-01. Sunday evening at 6:45 P.M., Lucinda Antrim (Scarsdale), clerk, welcomed Friends to the 322nd summer session of New York Yearly Meeting. Speaking to the theme "Bringing the Peaceable Kingdom to a Turbulent World," the clerk described how the Seed of the Peaceable Kingdom can be heard inside each of us, in our meetings for worship and all over the Silver Bay campus. She spoke to those new to worship, suggesting we listen to the furthest away sound we can possibly hear. In our fellowship, peace grows. By the time we leave, each seed will have put down roots and reached for the sun. We will be ready to face the turbulent world, both the one inside us and the one without.

2017-07-02. The Reading Clerk read the roll of regions, monthly meetings, and worship groups. Friends stood in response. Every region was represented.

2017-07-03. Liseli Haines (Mohawk Valley Meeting) presented an acknowledgment that the land we stand on today, sometimes known as the Mohawk Hunting Ground, was used for hunting by many Native Nations under the treaty or wampum of "The Dish with One Spoon." Like them, we recognize that there is only one dish, Mother Earth. We will take only what we need, and leave the dish clean. Because we use only a spoon, there will be no chance of bloodshed, no war. We meet now in gratitude for the care taken by the Native Nations and for the wisdom taught us. Their descendants live among us today.

2017-07-04. David Herendeen (Easton) called for volunteers to come forward for an interactive story. With the help of the children, David told the story of Stone Soup.

2017-07-05. Dawn Pozzi (Rochester) and Eleanor (Ellie) Rosenberg (Ithaca), co-coordinators of Junior Yearly Meeting (JYM), announced that each morning will begin in the Auditorium with community worship. The coordinators took us through a series of announcements about age groups, pick-up times, childcare options, and the need for a few more volunteers. Then the leaders of each JYM age group were introduced, and children left the Auditorium to meet their groups.

2017-07-06. Reading and approval of this evening's minutes were held over until Monday morning's session.

**Silver Bay, New York**  
**Monday, July 24, 2017; 10:45 a.m.**

*Lucinda Antrim (Scarsdale), Clerk*  
*Jeffrey Aaron (New Brunswick), Assistant Clerk*  
*Karen Way (New Brunswick), Recording Clerk*  
*Rima Segal (Rochester), Reading Clerk*

2016-07-07. This morning, we gathered again in worship. The clerk announced that we will begin each session by reading one of our Priorities. Today's Priority: "We envision a Yearly Meeting deeply grounded in the practice of our faith." We will also hold in the Light those Yearly Meetings that are meeting at the same or almost the same time as

we meet. Today we hold in the Light Central Yearly Meeting and Evangelical Friends Church Eastern Region.

The clerk introduced those at the clerks' table, reviewed today's agenda, and urged us to read the important materials on the Consent Agenda, which will be taken up on Friday morning.

2016-07-08. The clerk welcomed visitors:

- Ruth Reber visiting from Chestnut Hill Friends Meeting, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (PhYM), on behalf of Friends General Conference (Ruth's travel letter is attached),
- Kathleen Wooten and Maille Wooten, Fresh Pond Monthly Meeting, New England Yearly Meeting,
- Stephen Angell, from Earlham School of Religion and Oxford Monthly Meeting, Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting,
- Julie Rudd from Wilmington Monthly Meeting, Wilmington Yearly Meeting, E-commerce and media specialist from Friends United Meeting,
- Chad Cianfrani, head of Oakwood School,
- David Millar, Canadian Yearly Meeting, representing Quaker Earthcare Witness.

2017-07-09. Chad Gilmartin (Morningside), Digital Communications Director for NYYM, introduced the Yearly Meeting's new website: accessible this week at [new.nyym.org](http://new.nyym.org) or [newyorkyearlymeeting.org](http://newyorkyearlymeeting.org). Next week the new website will become [nyym.org](http://nyym.org), and will still be accessible at [newyorkyearlymeeting.org](http://newyorkyearlymeeting.org).

During the week, Chad will be offering an interest group in best practices in digital communication, a lunchtime overview of the new website, and consultation to monthly meetings about their own websites.

2017-07-10. Diane Keefe (Wilton) presented the report for the Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL). Diane strongly urged Friends to take every opportunity to lobby members of Congress during the August break and throughout the year. The proposed federal budget for 2018 would spend \$695 billion on the military while cutting programs in health care, housing, the environment, and diplomacy. FCNL is also focusing on issues of immigration, judicial policy, the bail system, and climate change. Diane directed us to [fcnl.org](http://fcnl.org), saying "There are a plethora of issues. Pick the one that moves you most and become an advocate." Advocacy will be supported by the Friends Welcome Center, which will open beginning this October to welcome delegations of Friends to Washington, DC for lobbying throughout the year.

Friends received the report.

2017-07-11. Marissa Badgley (Poughkeepsie) presented the State of the Society Report for the calendar year of 2016, looking toward 2017 (attached). State of the meeting reports were received from 60 monthly meetings and worship groups. She offered a comparative snapshot of prevalent themes and new themes in 2015 and 2016. Over 60% of the State of the Meeting reports mentioned the disruptive pain of the 2016 election, but many more spoke of joy, gratitude, hope, faith, trust, love, community, and justice. We are stressed but not disheartened. "In unusual times, we are learning to be brave in addition to faithful."

In November 2016, we were challenged to consider what and in what we trust. This year's state of the meeting reports confirm that our trust is abundant. We trust in our worship and practice as Friends, even though we don't always trust that Spirit is at the

core of Meeting practices or that our traditions always fit the present context. Instead, we trust in continuing revelation. We trust in our community, our love, our children, our history, and our eventual growth. Nevertheless, we worry whether people will come or stay. We worry whether we have enough time, energy, money or people, and whether we are going to survive. We trust in our commitment to justice and diversity, but we know our actions do not always align with that trust. We do not always trust that we know what to do.

Marissa led us in a short game of guessing the year of three quotations expressing worry and dismay about the state of the society of Friends. The answers were 1892, 1970, and 1975. The lesson is “we will survive.”

The state of society report concludes with this paragraph:

In 2017, New York Yearly Meeting Friends seek to be brave, to continue putting God at the center even when we are fearful or discouraged. We seek to build bridges between ourselves and our communities, and we seek to reimagine what we know and what we think we know. We seek to take advantage of the opportunities we are being given, even if these opportunities arise out of darkness. We seek to claim, name, and share the Truth as we experience it. And at the same time that we reach out, we seek to reach in. For we trust that “when we are aligned with God, our resources of abilities and gifts are multiplied by many times.” We trust in the Divine Source of Love. This trust is unshakeable.

After presenting the report, Marissa spoke to our pride and self-congratulation. Our state of the meeting reports tend to put the most positive light on the real state of our meetings. There were no mentions in these reports this year or last year about reaching out to young adults, many of whom are drifting away from the community of Quakers because they feel they do not belong. Are we preparing our children to lead us? The turbulence of the outside world distracts us from what Spirit is calling us to do. Marissa invited us to a more profound trust in God. She trusts that we are closer than we might imagine. She left us with a question: In what do you trust?

Friends received the report.

2017-07-12. Minutes were read, corrected and approved in stages during this session. After announcements, meeting closed with worship.

**Silver Bay, New York**

**Wednesday, July 26, 2016; 10:45 a.m.**

*Lucinda Antrim (Scarsdale), Clerk  
Jeffrey Aaron (New Brunswick), Assistant Clerk  
Karen Reixach (Ithaca), Recording Clerk  
Robin Alpern (Amawalk), Reading Clerk*

2017-07-13. The meeting opened with expectant worship. The Priority for the day was “We envision a Yearly Meeting made up of strong and vital monthly meetings.” The clerk invited us to hold in our hearts the Yearly Meetings gathering today: Iowa Yearly Meeting Conservative at Scattergood Friends School, West Branch, Iowa, and

Northwest Yearly Meeting at George Fox University, Newberg Oregon (this yearly meeting is dividing over whether constituent meetings can choose to be welcoming to LGBTQ as members and pastors, and can conduct same gender marriage). The clerk then welcomed Friends, introduced the clerks' table and reviewed the agenda. She reminded Friends to read the extensive materials on the Consent Agenda, which will be taken up on Friday morning. She welcomed whisper buddies, who help translate the arcane practices and language of Friends to new attenders.

2017-07-14. Silver Bay CEO Steve Tamm warmly welcomed Friends on behalf of the entire Silver Bay staff, noting that Friends might be interested to hear that Silver Bay is increasing its ecological stewardship of Lake George. He outlined the many major improvements in facilities.

2017-07-15. A memorial minute, entitled *Testimony to the Motion of the Spirit in the Life of Vince Buscemi*, was read.

Born in 1927 in a diverse section of Brooklyn, Vincent Paul "Vince" Buscemi died March 11, 2017. He served in the Navy and had an extensive career in engineering, but he is remembered among Friends for a life of justice and love. "For Vince spiritual and social concerns were inseparable. In his everyday walk, he showed how silence and prayer open the way to social action and how social action deepens silence and prayer." Whatever Vince did, he gave his whole self. He and his wife Ernie were part of the Community of Reconciliation that formed after the death of Martin Luther King, Jr. He became a convinced Friend and a member of 15th Street, and took early retirement in order to do God's work in a lifetime of witness against war and racism. The list of Vince's activities is extraordinary: among so many other things, he walked across Central America to witness against fighting there, he developed a workshop on racism that he took to four yearly meetings, and with his wife Ernie, he wrote a book titled "Here I Am Lord." He and Ernie transferred membership to Morningside Monthly Meeting, in part to support the LGBTQ community. He volunteered at the homeless shelter at 15<sup>th</sup> Street and at the Catholic Worker House. "He was always aware of the stranger, and he engaged the outsider with full attention and respect." He and Ernie served as Friends in Residence at Pendle Hill and were active in a variety of ways with Friends General Conference, New York Yearly Meeting and his monthly meeting. From the silence Friends affirmed his ministry of connection both compassionate and challenging, "a glowing ember like a light through colored glass and one great flame throwing kisses as he flew by."

2017-07-16. Emily Provance (15<sup>th</sup> Street) reported on the Friends United Meeting Triennial at Wichita, Kansas, July 12-16, 2017. Emily said at the Triennial she learned about the work of Friends United Meeting—building water filtration systems, educating girls, keeping kids out of gangs and organizing peace movements. Ninety percent of the membership of FUM is in Africa, and today FUM is committed to dismantling the western-centered, white-savior model. As we speak, Oscar Mmbali, a pastor born and raised in Kenya, is preparing to take his place as a pastoral minister in Belize, where a meeting has formed itself around Belize Friends School. She invited Friends to contribute to this effort.

David Herendeen (Easton) thanked New York Yearly Meeting, Northeast Region and his own meeting for assisting his attendance at the Triennial. He said he attended as an openly gay man. He described two dramatic encounters with FUM Friends with whom he was able to speak openly and who not only listened but heard him. He indicated that the FUM employment policy remains in place, but that there is movement.

Marissa Badgley (Poughkeepsie) issued an invitation to the next Triennial to be held in Kenya in 2020.

2017-07-17. Jeffrey Aaron (New Brunswick), co-clerk for the Meeting for Discernment Steering Committee, reported on yesterday's sessions. He observed that the two periods of worship and the evening reflection on them were deep and heartfelt.

Caroline Lane (Flushing), co-clerk, observed that the process of Meetings for Discernment is less than 10 years old in NYYM. With practice, we are learning to do it better. The silences are deep and the messages that arose yesterday rang true and were moving. Please consider participating in the next meeting for discernment.

The Meeting for Discernment approved the nomination of Beverly Archibald (Manhattan) as an at large member of the Meeting for Discernment Steering Committee, and accepted the requests for release from service from Nathaniel Corwin (Old Chatham) and from Regina Haag (Adirondack).

2017-07-18. Peter Cook, Executive Director of the New York State Council of Churches, offered a brief overview of the work of that body.

The Council advocates with the State Legislature for the poor and disenfranchised on issues such as the \$15 minimum wage, paid family leave, raising the age of prosecution and incarceration from 16-17 to 18, and affordable housing.

At the national level, health care remains an issue of deep concern. He urged people to contact their Senators and Congressional representatives.

The Council certifies and supports Protestant chaplains. It sponsors an annual high school retreat to the United Nations (last year focus was countering Islamophobia); the next retreat will be in Feb 2018.

Their program of bridging the urban-rural divide tries to get beyond the polarizing rhetoric and attend to the real needs in our communities.

Lucinda Antrim (Scarsdale) and Sara Niccoli (Brooklyn) are NYYM's representatives to the NYS Council's Collegium.

2017-07-19. Out of the silence our outgoing General Secretary, Christopher Sammond (Poplar Ridge), offered a final report.

He updated us on the search for the Young Adult Field Secretary; applications are still being sought. Emily Provance will continue to serve as the interim, with an ambitious agenda.

Programmatic interpretation of our 2016 expenditures (consolidated budget) helps us understand where the money goes because it incorporates the entire set of funds, not just the operating budget. Monthly meetings will receive a copy of the document. This will help in multi-year budgeting, and in assessing the progress on leadings and priorities.

He said, "I know you, I have stayed with you, I have worshiped and worked with you." He thanked us for all we have given him. He especially thanked his wife Barbara Rhudy and associate secretary Helen Garay Toppins.

Christopher offered a response to the question of what he will do next: This year will be a sabbatical, a time of listening and discernment. He offered the query, "Are you willing to live your life as though climate disruption is a reality?" He will join Pamela Boyce Simms in her efforts at reviving the fire of George Fox.

He will be stepping back from NYYM. He concluded, "I love you all and you won't be seeing me for some while."

A period of open worship followed Christopher's message. We have walked this path together, God has graced us and we are grateful—for your being open and listening, for worshiping in our homes, for naming our gifts, for trusting and challenging us, for deepening our faithfulness and our witness, for your groundedness and vision that informed bodies beyond NYYM, for planting seeds that will continue to grow. As ripples go out, they return with healing.

2017-07-20. Minutes were read, corrected and approved in stages during this session. Following announcements, the meeting closed with brief open worship.

**Silver Bay, New York**  
**Thursday, July 28, 2017; 10:45 a.m.**

*Lucinda Antrim (Scarsdale), Clerk*  
*Jeffrey Aaron (New Brunswick), Assistant Clerk*  
*Bridget Bower (Perry City), Recording Clerk*  
*Elaine Learnard (Conscience Bay), Reading Clerk*

2017-07-21. The meeting opened with a period of waiting worship. Our NYYM Priority for consideration today is: "We envision a Yearly Meeting gathered together into one body." The clerk introduced the clerks' table.

Minute 2017-07-17 from yesterday was read by Karen Reixach, recording clerk. Friends approved.

The clerk announced that the consent agenda is in its final form and that final nominations will be available by 1 pm. The agenda was reviewed. The clerk extended a welcome to Friends who arrived mid-week. Arthur Larrabee brings greetings from Central Philadelphia Monthly Meeting and Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. Patricia (Trish) Eckert, new pastor of Farmington Friends Church, has just come from Richmond,

Indiana. The clerk also reminded Friends that whisper buddies are present for individuals who need interpretation of Friends' practice.

2017-07-22. John Cooley (Central Finger Lakes,) clerk of General Services, introduced Barbara Menzel, reporting for the Search Committee for the General Secretary. She outlined the process of the Search Committee. She reported that Steven Mohlke (Ithaca) is the candidate who is best suited to meet the needs of the yearly meeting and recommend his appointment as our General Secretary. Their report is attached.

Friends approved the recommendation of Steven Mohlke as our next General Secretary.

2017-07-23. Steve was invited to speak. He shared his story of his growth as a Friend in our yearly meeting and in his own meeting, working in community and in Spirit. Many Friends have nourished his journey. Working with Friends in Ithaca, he found that building the community nourished the life of the meeting and that his spiritual journey and that of the meeting aligned. He anticipates listening a great deal over the next few months, inviting Friends to consider where we are. He welcomes opportunities to work with others, in community, and with Spirit, to address difficult issues.

Friends welcomed Steve to his new role.

2017-07-24. Emily Provance (15<sup>th</sup> Street), interim young adult field secretary, spoke about her work. Her work starts with the question:

What conversations do we need to have to be a fully inclusive New York Yearly Meeting?

Programs that she is working on include:

A series of video conference conversations on multi-age inclusion; Quaker Exploration and Discourse Days; a social media project sponsored by Ministry Coordinating Committee, which will include 18 meetings in Phase 2; Quaker Outside the Lines; NYYM Connect.

A full report will be attached. Her report was received.

2017-07-25. Melinda Wenner Bradley (West Chester, PhYM), children and youth secretary, reported on her work.

She called us to continue to engage in the ways we know — and are discovering — to be in multi-age, multi-generational spiritual community. The charge to do that exciting, challenging, and Spirit-filled work is in all our hands. The spiritual nurture of our young people is the business and responsibility of the whole yearly meeting. She is particularly interested in sharing ideas that provide our children with experiential learning about Quaker faith and practice, including our witness in the world.

Her report is attached. Friends received the report.

2017-07-26. Callie Janoff (Brooklyn), director of ARCH (Aging Resources Consultation and Help) spoke of the work that ARCH is doing across the yearly meeting. They endeavor to help to create opportunities to see growing older as a blessing and as a rich opportunity for spiritual growth for ourselves and those around us. She reported on their strategic planning process. Her report is attached. Friends received the report.

2017-07-28. Doug Way (New Brunswick), clerk of the Pay As Led Ad Hoc Subcommittee of Sessions Committee, summarized the Pay as Led proposal. The full

report is attached. Our goal is to enrich both those who cannot currently come due to financial constraints and those of us who may have been coming for many years through expanded participation and new life and energy. He provided a list of the core issues to be considered.

1. Minimum charge per attendee (25% of SB [Silver Bay] rate for cheapest rooms, 75% for most expensive rooms)
2. Registrants may choose to pay any amount above the minimum
3. Registrants will be required to name their principal Quaker connection (MM, Powell House, or other Quaker body)
4. Registrants with special needs will be supported as they are today
5. Rooms will be allocated on a first come first served basis (i.e. no preference for those paying at or above the SB rate except for special needs).
6. We expect Friends will faithfully consider their choices and that payments above the SB rate will balance those below
7. NYYM funds will be required to pay off a deficit, if any
8. GS [General Services Coordinating Committee] and Sessions will establish processes to implement PaL

He also noted that implementation details have not yet been worked out and indicated that an ad hoc committee for implementation is anticipated.

The working group expects that Friends will faithfully consider their choices for payment. He noted that most of us who are here will likely pay more. This is a spiritual experiment. Are we willing to take this leap of faith?

Concerns were raised about the amount of financial risk the Yearly Meeting would be exposed to. It was noted that parents of young children and JYM volunteers were mostly not present. Members of the Senior high group were present for the entire session.

A decision was deferred to a future session.

2017-07-29. The minutes were read, corrected, and approved in stages during the session. Announcements were then read. The meeting closed at 1:00 p.m.

**Silver Bay, New York**  
**Friday, July 28, 2017; 10:45 a.m.**

*Lucinda Antrim (Scarsdale), Clerk*  
*Jeffrey Aaron (New Brunswick), Assistant Clerk*  
*Karen Way (New Brunswick), Recording Clerk*  
*Rima Segal (Rochester), Reading Clerk*

2017-07-30. We gathered in expectant worship. Lucinda Antrim, clerk, read the NYYM Priority chosen for today: "We envision a Yearly Meeting that nurtures our children, youth, and young adults." The clerk introduced the clerks' table and thanked the elders who are holding us in the Light, as well as the Whisper Buddies who are helping individuals in the body understand our procedures.

2017-07-31. The reading clerk read the names of four yearly meetings that are meeting during or near this week. We hold in the Light Iowa Yearly Meeting FUM, North Pacific Yearly Meeting, Indiana Yearly Meeting, and Western Yearly Meeting. Friends were also urged to hold in the Light Wilmington Yearly Meeting that is undergoing a difficult discernment at this time.

2017-07-32. The reading clerk read the Epistle that came from the Friends General Conference Gathering workshop "Tansi (Welcome), Indigenous Peoples and Quakers as Allies." We are listening to the rising message that the Religious Society of Friends must return to the path of the Heart and build right relationship with all indigenous peoples and Mother Earth. We are asked, What calls you going forth?

2017-07-33. In accordance with our consent agenda practice, the clerk reported that the previously posted contents had required no amendments. Friends therefore approved the following items (minutes 2017-07-34 through 36).

2017-07-34. The report on Interim actions by the clerk and general secretary was received. (Report attached.)

2017-07-35. Nominations for appointment to service are approved. (Report attached.)

2017-07-36. Release from service was approved: Karen Reixach from the Alternatives to Violence Committee.

2017-07-37. Elaine Learnard (Conscience Bay), clerk of the Nominating Committee, read the names of three individuals whose nominations must be considered specifically, because they are not formally affiliated with New York Yearly Meeting. Friends heard and approved the following three appointments:

Communications Committee

Class of 2020

Jennifer Swann, South Berkshire, MA New England Yearly Meeting (co-opted)

Elsie K. Powell House, Inc.

Class of 2018

Esther Gilbert, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (co-opted)

Indian Affairs Committee

Class of 2018

Freida Jacques, Onondaga Turtle Clan (co-opted)

Friends approved.

2017-07-38. Elaine read the the following nominations that were not included in the Consent Agenda:

Indian Affairs Committee

Class of 2018

Maureen Healy

Ann-Marie Scheidt

Fifteenth Street

Conscience Bay

Class of 2020

Ian Hansen

Lynne James

Fifteenth Street

Poughkeepsie

Friends approved.

2017-07-39. Rima Segal (Rochester), for the Epistle Committee, presented a draft of the Epistle describing our life and our work this week as a blessed community. The Epistle will come back to us completed later today. Friends were advised to speak to members of the Epistle committee if they have suggestions or corrections.

2017-07-40. John Cooley, clerk of General Services Coordinating Committee, introduced Mary Williams (Bullshead-Oswego), Treasurer of New York Yearly Meeting. She presented a report "without any numbers," referring Friends to extensive documents in the Advance Reports and Consent Agenda. Mary described the new format for the NYYM Financial Summary, showing on one page Operations, Fund Balances, and Invested Trust Funds (approved in the Consent Agenda). John Cooley added that Budget Saturday is October 21, 2017, when Yearly Meeting Friends can discuss present and future details.

2017-07-41. John Cooley presented for approval a change coming from the Personnel Committee and General Services Coordinating Committee. General Services Coordinating Committee recommends laying down the separate committee named "Supervisory Committee for the General Secretary." The functions of this committee have been consolidated within the Personnel Committee. The NYYM Handbook page is being revised to include this change and will be presented for first reading at Fall Sessions.

Friends initially approved this change.

2017-07-42. Fred Dettmer (Purchase) clerk of the New York Yearly Meeting Board of Trustees, presented a first reading of a revision to the By-Laws that addresses the unification of the positions of YM treasurer and Trustees Treasurer (full text attached). Friends heard the first reading.

2017-07-43. When the minutes were read for approval, some Friends expressed concern that they were being asked to approve proposed changes too quickly, without enough background information to discern as a body. Further questions were raised about the laying down of the Supervisory Committee of the General Secretary and proper structure of the Personnel Committee. Eventually, Friends rescinded approval of minute 2017-07-41, asking for a more detailed explanation of the issue at a future session.

2017-07-43. Steve Mohlke, former clerk of Ithaca Monthly Meeting, corrected an implication in the State of Society Report that Ithaca Meeting, made up almost entirely of European-Americans, “set the stage for the birth of the Friends Center for Racial Justice.” The actual story is more complex and involves crucial initiatives from people of color. The phrase was changed to “the Friends Center for Racial Justice, a ministry of the Task Group on Racism, found a home in Ithaca, NY, with the offer of Burt House by Ithaca Friends Meeting.” Steve urged Friends to try to see beyond the European-American frame that constricts so many of us.

2017-07-44. Junior Yearly Meeting entered the Auditorium singing “This Pretty Planet” (attached), surrounding and blessing seated Friends, who rose in response. When the song finished, the clerk asked Friends of all ages to be seated, and invited Steve Mohlke to share his message again.

Friends received his report.

2017-07-45. Final minutes were read and approved. After announcements, we closed with quiet worship.

**Friday, July 28, 2016; 4:15 – 5:30 p.m.**

*Lucinda Antrim (Scarsdale), Clerk  
Jeffrey Aaron (New Brunswick), Assistant Clerk  
Karen Reixach (Ithaca), Recording Clerk  
Robin Alpern (Amawalk), Reading Clerk*

2017-07-46. The meeting opened with expectant worship.

2017-07-47. The clerk welcomed Friends, introduced the clerks’ table and reviewed the agenda. The Priority for the day was: “We envision a Yearly Meeting that supports and amplifies our witness.” The body was asked to hold the following Yearly Meetings gathered at the same time or close to our sessions: Lake Erie Yearly Meeting, Britain Yearly Meeting, Sierra Cascade Yearly Meeting, which emerged yesterday from Northwest Yearly Meeting.

Our clerk, Lucinda Antrim, acknowledged that yesterday during the discussion of Pay as Led, her spiritual condition was not clear and she did not call on young people who wanted to be recognized assuming erroneously that their messages were not responding to what she had invited Friends to speak to; she feels that she has centered and is ready to conduct the business today.

2017-07-48. Melanie Claire Mallison, clerk of Sessions and member of the Pay as Led Ad Hoc Subcommittee, stressed that the whole point of Pay as Led is to allow people who want to be at Yearly Meeting sessions to be able to attend.

Doug Way, clerk of the Pay as Led Ad Hoc Subcommittee, noted spiritual and financial challenges. The clerk summarized some of the concerns expressed in the discussion to date:

--Who gets to come? How do we draw the line? We are clear that the spirit in which we offer Pay as Led matters, that we want to be welcoming and hospitable. Concern that families and those in transition may be hurt by this process depending on where we draw that line. We noted that we have been talking to those who are here, who have the time and resources. We need to talk to those who are not here. The Ad Hoc Subcommittee has not included any of those people.

--Concern about financial risk. Some will pay more than the cost of summer sessions, some will pay the same, and some less. We accept the risks.

--Concern about the implementation, particularly of registration.

2017-07-49. Friends approved working toward becoming one body, in part through the spiritual exercise of Pay As Led.

We will leave to the subcommittee the details of implementation (technical, procedural, additional volunteer or paid assistance, eligibility).

We understand that if we cannot have a detailed plan by Fall Sessions, we are unlikely to be able to implement by 2018 and encourage the subcommittee to continue its work.

2017-07-50. Remaining minute 2017-07-44 from from the morning session was read and approved.

2017-07-51. The minutes of the afternoon session were read, corrected, and approved in stages during the session. Announcements were read. The meeting closed at 5:30 p.m.

**Friday, July 28, 2016; 6:45 p.m.**

*Lucinda Antrim (Scarsdale), Clerk  
Jeffrey Aaron (New Brunswick), Assistant Clerk  
Bridget Bower (Perry City), Recording Clerk  
Elaine Learnard, Reading Clerk*

2017-07-52. The meeting began with a period of open worship.

2017-07-53. The clerk introduced the clerks' table. Jeffrey Aaron (New Brunswick), assistant clerk, joined the table later.

2017-07-54. On April 9<sup>th</sup>, at the invitation of Irish Young Friends, a group of four high school Friends, from meetings throughout New York Yearly Meeting, accompanied by Chris DeRoller of Powell House, journeyed to Ireland to attend Ireland Junior Yearly Meeting. Each of the young Friends spoke of their experiences.

They were impressed by how smoothly the youth ran their business sessions, as well as how kind and welcoming they were; appreciative of how supportive they were of their clerks and how engaged they were. One was fascinated by the history of the Quakers in Ireland and the Quaker Cottage in Belfast. The current NYYM Junior Yearly Meeting clerk was impressed by the Irish JYM clerks and their role in the life of the JYM of Ireland.

Friends received the report. A full report is attached.

2017-07-55. Melanie-Claire Mallison (Ithaca) reported for Sessions Committee. This week, the Fun(d) Fair raised \$750, there was \$1362.40 from the Tagless tag sale, and Café Night raised \$4,876. She reported that there were 450 total Friends in attendance: 338 adults and 112 in Junior Yearly Meeting.

2017-07-56. The 1st and 2nd grade group brought their views of the Peaceable Kingdom to share with us. They came to celebrate God, to have fun, to be with family, and to look at nature. They led us in a rendition of "This Little Light of Mine."

2017-07-57. The 3rd and 4th grade group had 12 participants who created Peaceable "something"-doms and demonstrated shadow puppets "in the light," complete with commentary from each.

Their full report was read aloud: "The 3/4s gathered and created our Peaceable "something"-dom. We were greatly enriched by games, the turtle "tiny-mo," our lovely bracelets and face painting for the Fun(d) Fair, the beach, and our inspiring visitors. We survived rain, cold weather, and bad jokes (by certain adults). We went on to build our "something"-doms, that became peaceable, using shadow puppets and a light box. Our kids will now show their puppets and we will hold them in the light!"

2017-07-58. The 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade group enthusiastically reenacted their week in a skit. Highlights include the great plastic cup massacre and a visit with Nadine Hoover, and a moment of waiting worship in linked canoes.

2017-07-59. Junior High reenacted their week, ranging from a variety of name whips, water worship thwarted by rain, guided meditation and fainting goat tag (don't ask). New clerks for next year were announced. They are Tallulah Klein and Josie Mack

2017-07-60. The High School group read a poem, creating a Peaceable Kingdom in rhyme. It is attached. Next year's clerks were announced: Althea Brennan, Analea Blackburn, Abby Burgess.

Senior names (those who will be graduating out of JYM) were read.

2017-07-61. All of the epistles were received.

2017-07-62. Rima Segal (Rochester) read the epistle for New York Yearly Meeting. Friends approved the epistle. It is attached.

2017-07-63. The 322nd session of New York Yearly Meeting rose at the end of a period of worship.

Attachments for Monday:

Ruth Reber's travel minute

State of Society report

Attachments for Thursday:

2017-07-22 (Search Committee)

Search for a General Secretary for New York Yearly Meeting

The process began with the Ad Hoc Committee on Staff Structure, which was charged with examining the roles and responsibilities of staff. It spent many months gathering information and suggestions from Meetings, Committees and persons with specific responsibilities within the Yearly Meeting. After a period of discernment, the Ad Hoc Committee issued a report with specific recommendations which was presented to the Body of the Yearly Meeting. Based on that committee's work, a new job description for the General Secretary was created and a search committee appointed by General Services.

The search committee consisted of Barbara Menzel, Clerk; Charley Flint, member of a local Meeting, Hans Jurgen-Lehmann, Clerk of Personnel; Michael Clark, Powell House youth; Lisa Gasstrom, a management consultant and member of a local Meeting, and John Cooley, Clerk of General Services. The Committee met initially to review the recommendations of the Ad Hoc committee and created a set of questions which would be used in interviewing the final candidates.

We received a total of nine applications and interviewed four candidates, all members of local Meetings within New York Yearly Meeting. Each interview lasted between one hour and one and a half hours and began with the set of interview questions we had identified. Follow-up questions focused on the candidates' administrative experience, their knowledge of financial budgets, staff development, and their own spiritual grounding.

The committee spent considerable time in worship and discernment, looking at each of the four final candidates in terms of the job description. We did, after some time and additional committee meetings, come to unity on a candidate. At that point, we checked

that person's references to be sure that the candidate had represented himself accurately.

Steven Mohlke was the candidate who was best suited to meet the needs of New York Year Meeting, and we have recommended to Personnel Committee and they have accepted the recommendation, that he be employed as our next General Secretary. He has held several Clerking positions, including Clerk of Ithaca Meeting and Clerk of NYYM Financial Services. He has served as Co-Clerk of Friends General Conference 2017 Gathering Committee. He has supervised a large program of Teaching Assistants at Cornell University. Steven also brings to the Yearly Meeting his spiritual ground and strong Quaker faith. He participated in the School of the Spirit, a two year program of prayer and study.

His appointment as General Secretary begins at the end of Summer Sessions 2017.

2017-07-34

Staff Report

Interim Young Adult Field Secretary, Emily Provance

NYYM Summer Sessions 2017

One of the most frequent questions I'm asked as your interim young adult field secretary is, "Why don't more young adults come to [insert meeting event here]." Sometimes people ask this question because they want to complain, but often, people ask this question because they actually want to know the answer, and that's a wonderful thing—because there are, in fact, answers to that question.

Although there are many factors outside the control of Friends that prevent young adults and other younger generations from participating fully, there are also factors within the culture of Quaker society itself that act as barriers for full participation from younger generations. In September and October, I'll be doing a series of interactive video conferences on this very topic—on the ways in which our culture sometimes creates barriers to multiage inclusion and on how we can flip that culture to be more fully inclusive. The six video conferences, each one hour long, will explore these six topics: building a permission-giving culture, using language to empower, understanding joy as sacred, getting outside the meetinghouse, supporting Friends in multiage spaces, and reinterpreting traditions in the light. These video conferences will be fun and interactive and will focus on what we *can do*, right now, so that the beloved community that we cherish can be even more accessible to Friends of all ages. Attend as many of the calls as you can and want to—no need to commit to all six. The Zoom video platform is pretty easy to use. But if you really want the information and really can't do video calls, which I understand, I do have something in writing that will be less fun but will provide some of the same information. Come ask me about it.

I have another exciting initiative to tell you about that has just been approved this week. At spring sessions this year, MCC approved an experiment by which we would use Facebook

ads as a form of outreach for local meetings. In coordination with various groups, I ran ads within a twenty-minute travel radius of six local meetings (Old Chatham, Scarsdale, Wilton, Montclair, Albany, and Conscience Bay). I targeted people between the ages of 18 and 40. At the end of fifty days of running these Facebook ads, we had reached over 90,000 young adults. There is an eighteen-page report on this experiment that you can find on the multiage inclusion table and also online at [nyym.org](http://nyym.org), or I can tell you where to find it on my blog. The report explains the exciting history of the project and also helps you know how you can try this in your own monthly meeting area.

Yesterday, MCC approved funding for a Phase Two of the experiment. In Phase Two, I will be working with up to 18 meetings. This is an opportunity to work one-on-one, a partnership between me and Friends in local meetings. We'll run Facebook ads—now that we've done Phase One of the experiment, we know which types of ads work well—and we'll coordinate that with building a really strong overall Facebook presence for the meeting. By the end of the fifty days, at least one member or attender of the local meeting will have learned how to run a Facebook ad campaign and maintain a strong presence on Facebook. The minimum requirements for a meeting to participate in this experiment are (1) that the meeting must name a member or attender for me to work with who can serve as a co-admin for the meeting's Facebook page and (2) that the meeting must fund 50% of the ads (\$125). The deadline for participation is coming up quickly—you must email me with a commitment to participate by August 13<sup>th</sup>, and we'll start the experiment just days after that. It's first-come, first-served, except that the six meetings that participated in Phase One will receive priority.

Next, I want to tell you a story about something that happened with the QuED series, which stands for Quaker Exploration and Discourse. It's a story about a guy named Dustin. See, QuED Days are days with three speakers in the morning and open time for connections in the afternoon. Gabi Savory Bailey and I have been doing these one Saturday a month in different parts of the yearly meeting, with monthly meetings graciously hosting and providing food. We also live stream these on Facebook so that people can watch remotely in real time and even ask questions of the speakers through Facebook. In May, we were at Mohawk Valley, and this guy named Dustin started watching. We don't have any idea how he found it—Facebook is like that—but he was really interested and started asking questions, and it turned out he was only about forty-five minutes away from where we were, and at the end of the morning, he asked him to send him the address of his nearest Quaker meeting. QuED is a powerful experience of personal testimony and spiritual conversation. All young adults from anywhere are invited, plus members and attenders of the host meetings, and everyone is invited to watch online. All the old videos are up on Facebook from January through July, and you don't have to have an account on Facebook to watch them. Please spread the word about these. In August we're at Manhasset, in September at Montclair, in October we're near Lake Chautauqua but hosted by Buffalo meeting, in November at New Brunswick, and in December at Brooklyn.

One of the cultural barriers to multiage inclusion that I mentioned at the beginning of this report has to do with the relevance of being outside the meetinghouse. Surveys of young people across the faith spectrum tell us that one of the primary reasons younger people

*don't* participate in faith communities is because they perceive these faith communities as being internally focused and irrelevant to their neighborhood communities. Whether or not this is true, the *perception* that this is true is keeping younger generations away.

To help work with that perception, we have an initiative called Quaker Outside the Lines! Many of you remember that this is an initiative designed to offer financial reimbursement (up to \$200) for projects that involve meaningful service in the neighborhood community. Any project counts, if it meets five requirements: Quakers and non-Quakers doing something together, reflection of Quaker faith, meaningful to the local community, at least part of it happens outside the meetinghouse, and you post about it on social media at least once. This program is funded entirely by an outside grant that I received through a course I attended through Duke Divinity School, but the term of the grant ends soon, and if there's any money left, we have to give it back!

To give you a quick idea of what projects have happened so far: online clearinghouse for meaningful local actions, connecting Quakers with secular groups to work against solitary confinement, multifaith conversation forum, Justice for All Concert, Spanish-language training for immigrants threatened with deportation, interfaith racial justice weekend, interfaith community book study, body-based nonviolence training, presentations on eradicating solitary confinement, community building in a neighborhood in Brooklyn, white privilege conversation series, Quaker worship goes to Burning Man, solitary confinement cell at a county fair, cost of war art installation, butterfly release, urban mural, community garden with mental health organization, and education about women's suffrage.

We can fund at least ten more projects. You can do this as an individual Friend, a group of Friends, or a whole meeting or church, but it has to be finished by the end of October. Can you pass on the word to others in your meeting? Let's not give any of the money back—let's use it all!

Finally, let's talk about NYYM Connect! This is a difficult announcement to make in this setting because it's really mostly for people who are *not* in this room. Those of us who regularly attend sessions already have a pretty good idea how to get the information and announcements that we want. We know to call Helen, or email Melinda or Callie, and we know how to access the website and the Facebook page, and we have a pretty good idea what's available.

But lots of the Friends back in our meetings might not, especially relatively new attenders. New York Yearly Meeting now has regular or semi-regular newsletters on outreach, young adult concerns, and things for children and families, and Powell House has a newsletter, and ARCH has a newsletter, and there's InfoShare and Spark and the global email list. A lot of times, Friends back in our monthly meetings can't hope to keep up with all of this, and they miss things, often things they'd very much like to know about. NYYM Connect! is a super-simple Google form that anybody can go to and sign up for or remove themselves from any of the mailing lists that New York Yearly Meeting maintains, and we've looped in Powell House as well. The address is [www.tinyurl.com/nyymconnect](http://www.tinyurl.com/nyymconnect). I

am asking all Friends who are receiving this information to pass that address on as widely as possible.

2017-07-25. Melinda's report

Children and Youth Field Secretary's Report

Melinda Wenner Bradley

July 27, 2017

NYYM Summer Sessions

Good morning, Friends. My name is Melinda Wenner Bradley, and I serve this yearly meeting as the children and youth field secretary.

In preparation for our sessions, and the theme of Bringing the Peaceable Kingdom to a Turbulent World, I turned to the writing of peace studies scholar and activist Elise Boulding. She wrote about families and children often in her work. Boulding writes: "If we want to rediscover human joy and wholeness and creativity, and to learn to care for our planetary household as one earth family, we cannot continue to insulate adults and children from each other. Children need to be present to us, and we to them [...]"<sup>1</sup>

Friends, we need to continue to engage in the ways we know — and are discovering — to be in multi-age, multigenerational spiritual community.

The charge to do that exciting, challenging, and Spirit-filled work is in all our hands. The spiritual nurture of our young people is the business and responsibility of the whole yearly meeting. That charge is also like a compass that guides all parts of the work of the Children and Youth Field Secretary.

1 "The Personhood of Children" by Elise Boulding

In the first fifteen months of this position's existence, I've traveled thousands of miles, visiting and worshipping 27 times with Friends in local and regional meetings across the yearly meeting. I have gathered with parents and families to share our joys and challenges at Quaker Family Meetups, partnered with my Powell House youth colleagues to lead Youth Institutes, collaborated with faithful volunteers, played — and worshipped — with kids, listened to teens, supported religious education and outreach committees, and been supported by extraordinary colleagues on the Yearly Meeting staff. This morning I would like to share with you two images for this work, and invite into this space the voices of our young people.

One of the metaphors that came to me while describing the CYFS work in my advance report was a switchboard operator, the kind who listened and connected calls across a big switchboard lighting up in front of them.

Every time I travel among Friends in our yearly meeting I encounter the ways we are sharing our Light with one another, in the ideas and energy that are serving monthly meeting and regional programs for children, youth, and families. I imagine the map of the yearly meeting, lit up before me.

Part of what I am called to do in this work is find ways to connect Friends with one another and facilitate that sharing — and the relationships that grow from it. There will be fresh resources populating the youth pages of the new yearly meeting website this

fall, and you can subscribe to the CYFS e-newsletter to hear more about new resources and what's happening in local meetings.

I'm particularly interested in sharing ideas that provide our children with experiential learning about Quaker faith and practice, including our witness in the world. I've had multiple conversations here at sessions with Friends interested in how to share their witness and ministries with young Friends. Yes, please! We need not wait; let us include in our witness the raising of children empowered to make authentic change.

Let's give them both spiritual and practical tools; teach them about witness anchored in faith, and create opportunities to join the community in service. I think we must do the work that encourages and prepares our children to be, as Robin Mohr says, "the Quakers the world needs." A people who listen for God and dwell in what we profess. Let's also support the Friends called to the ministry of building spiritual community with the children and youth in our local meetings.

This afternoon, you're invited to a conversation under the care of Nurture Coordinating Committee, discerning the way forward for the yearly meeting Youth Committee.

Together with the Friends serving on and nominated to the committee — and older youth are among those Friends, it will be multi-age committee — we're exploring how to broaden that network and nurture a community of practice among Friends called to youth work. I imagine us working together at the switchboard, plugging in the different lines, connecting Friends, ideas, and resources.

Last summer after Sessions, Marissa Badgley shared with me responses to the following queries from visits to the 3rd/4th Grade and Junior High groups at JYM:

What is your spiritual condition?

What does being a Quaker mean to you?

What is the spiritual condition of this JYM group?

I'd like to share just a few of the responses from young Friends:

- Growing together and learning
- Noticing the light
- Searching for a home
- Being included in what my meeting considers an adult decision
- Finding the patience to help find the bright light in all people
- It means being part of something bigger than yourself and always being welcomed
- I know I believe in the light but it is confusing
- A community working together to improve the world through spirituality
- Togetherness into infinity

Let's take a moment just to hold those responses from JYM participants. They lift up community, and they also spoke with candor and hope about their spiritual lives, and what it means to them to be a Friend.

The Monthly Meeting Partner Project seeks new ways to best support the spiritual lives of children and youth and nurture multigenerational community life and worship.

The Yearly Meeting is now inviting applications for two more meetings to join the Partner

Project. We start by listening to the condition of the meeting and all ages in it, asking questions:

How do we welcome one another? Do we know each other's gifts? Do we know how to participate?

How are my gifts included as part of the whole?

The metaphor of going on a group hike has seemed appropriate to the work we're doing: When we head out on a group hike, we decide how far we would like to go that day, and what trail to take. On any hike, we may encounter a turn in the trail we did not anticipate, or someone will get a stone in their shoe and we'll need to slow down and wait for them. We take breaks for sustenance and we encourage one another.

I anticipate that some of this will be true in the next two years of the project as partner meetings set out on new trails and seeks new ways to be a multigenerational spiritual community. I look forward to walking with them, and sharing what we learn with the wider yearly meeting body. I continue to be deeply grateful to Montclair and Wilton Meeting for their partnership on this journey, and look forward to welcoming new meetings to the project.

If you're interested in hearing more about the Partner Project, please join us for dinner on Friday in the Gullen Lounge of the Inn — I'll be joined by Friends currently engaged with the project, from Montclair and Wilton.

Finally, Elise Boulding enjoins us that children need to be present to us, and we to them. In the last year, we have gathered for multi-age worship together at all our Sessions and also at Farmington-Scipio's Spring Gathering. In each experience, we were challenged in some way by one

another, and God, to listen, be patient, and hold that space for everyone.

During Community Worship at Farmington-Scipio Spring Gathering, there was deep sweetness in what the children were working on in that time during worship —

Including a child taking all the wooden people figures out of the story basket and putting them in a big circle before pausing and intently rearranging them by size and shape — He nudged me to look at what he had made, and whispered, "It's infinity." I whispered back, "Tell me more." and he said, "It's the mothers, then the babies, who become kids, and then they are adults and it starts all over again. Infinity."

That which is Infinite. Endless. Boundless. It was in the space of the silence, in the communion of waiting and listening together, that Spirit was present for all of us, all ages.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve and share in this grace with you.

2017-07-26. Callie's report

**Good morning Friends.** My name is Callie Janoff and I serve this yearly meeting as the Director of your ARCH program. ARCH stands for Aging Resources Consultation and Help.

If you are **over the age of 65**, raise those hands. Keep your hands up. Raise hands if **you are in a caregiver role with someone over the age of 65**. If you are caring for

someone over 65 **and also caring for children under the age of 18**, put up your other hand. Those of you without your hands up currently: **is there someone in your life that is over the age of 65 that is a part of this yearly meeting that is important to you?**

You can raise your hands too. Thank you Friends, you can put those hands down.

Growing older isn't something that happens to **someone else. It happens to us.** So why do we resist terms like elderly, aged, retirement, senior citizen, even old, if **they are us?** There are very powerful assumptions and unspoken rules in our world, that tell us that **youth is preferred**, that any diminishment in our capacity to be "productive" is a diminishment to our value to society, and that we can actually **avoid dying**.

NYYM's ARCH program engages Friends and meeting communities to reconsider these assumptions about the last third of life. We help to create opportunities to **experience growing older as a blessing**, as something to **look forward to**, as a **rich opportunity for spiritual growth** for ourselves and those around us.

For the last 10 years the ARCH program has served NYYM Friends by creating these opportunities for fostering vital monthly meetings in the **workshops** we offer to monthly & quarterly meetings and worship groups. In **ARCH Visitor training** individuals go deeper into how to offer and to receive care that is a mutual exchange of gifts of the spirit, growing our capacity to trust and be vulnerable with each other: key ingredients for going deeper in worship. By **singing our counter-cultural message** - that blessings attend our last third of life - to one another and into the world around us, we amplify our commitment to equality and justice.

Last year at this time the ARCH program was at a watershed moment: either ask for support from NYYM, or dramatically scale back this vibrant program whose work

supports us all. **Friends chose to support the ARCH program**, and such generous funding came forward from individuals to continue our work, that funds from NYYM were not needed in 2016 after all. In addition we applied for and received an additional grant from our primary funder, the Friends Foundation for the Aging, to engage in strategic and business planning to chart a path forward that could be both flexible and prophetic. That strategic planning process happened this Spring and **the seeds of that process are already beginning to sprout and grow**. We have distributed a one page summary of that 21 page plan, which is available in full both on the ARCH page of the NYYM website and there are a couple of copies on the ARCH table in Gullen Lounge.

I'll let Friends review this at your leisure. But I do want to point out the two bubbles that say **strategic and operational priorities**. These describe a way forward to integrate the content, the programming, the ministry, AND the operations, and administration of the ARCH program with the content, programming, ministry, operations, and administration of the New York Yearly Meeting. Friends who's ministry is to care for the NYYM's programming and offerings and those who's call is to the finance, operations, personnel, and administration of the yearly meeting are already hard at work sorting out the nitty gritty of how to do this, and it is my sense that the bulk of this work will be completed this calendar year.

Now I know you are all asking yourselves: How can I be involved with this great work! I'm glad you asked. **Start by taking the ARCH Survey**. There are some paper copies here, but even better is if you can take it online. I have that web address here, and at the ARCH table, where you can also return those paper surveys. Ask others in your

meetings to take the survey too. And We'll send this out to the NYYM email list at some point later this summer or early fall.

What else can you do to support the ARCH program? If you didn't get a chance to yesterday, **thank Anita Paul**, co-founder of the ARCH program who is retiring from the program staff this year. **If you have benefited from the wise counsel, spiritual support, and generous listening of Anita over the years, consider making a donation to the ARCH program or to NYYM that honors her years of service.**

But maybe most importantly, we can all participate in this Cultural Revolution by **getting right with ourselves and your own assumptions about aging**: our own or others. Is your meeting burdened with unmet aging related concerns? **Invite us to facilitate a program or workshop for your meeting.** Are you in a transition, struggle, or quandary related to your own aging, or the aging of someone you care about, but haven't or don't feel you can ask for support? **It is a radical act to ask for and to receive the care of others.** There are sign up forms on our table in Gullen Lounge to Visit with an ARCH person this week. Or call or email me to set something up after Summer Sessions. **Are you passionate about dismantling our culture of mass incarceration?** Visit the interest group this afternoon about Aging, ARCH and Prisons. Are you someone who is called to ministry with elder Friends? Consider taking the ARCH Visitor Training, or sign up for our newsletter: ARCH Supports by visiting the ARCH table. **Thank you Friends!**

**Attachments for Friday evening:**

2017-07-54 attachment:

2017 Ireland JYM Trip Report

Presenters: Abigail Byrtus (Shrewsbury MM), Matthew Lindop (Saratoga MM), Lucy Jackson (Rockland MM) and Zachary Clausen (Purchase MM), Chris DeRoller (Old Chatham MM)

On April 9<sup>th</sup>, at the invitation of Irish Young Friends, a group of four high school Friends from meetings throughout New York Yearly Meeting journeyed to Ireland to attend Ireland Junior Yearly Meeting. The trip was supported by a \$600 grant from the Nurture Coordinating Committee to cover the IJYM program fee. Additional support was received from the Bob Bacon Fund (\$400) and Purchase Monthly Meeting.

Carolyn Ritchie, Youth Coordinator for Ireland Yearly Meeting, met us at the Dublin airport. With Carolyn as our guide, we saw many historical sights along the northern coast, in the southern Wicklow mountains and in the cities of Dublin and Belfast. In Belfast, Carolyn showed us the peace wall separating Protestant and Catholic neighborhoods and took us to the site of the former Quaker House Belfast which provided a much needed safe space for Protestant and Catholics to dialogue.

These experiences gave us a knowledge of Irish history that we did not know of before. It was intriguing to find that Quakers have played an integral role in the lives of many Catholic and Protestant families in Belfast. Through discussions with Carolyn, we also discovered the powerful impact Quakers have had in prisons, all throughout Ireland.

We had the opportunity to speak with other Irish Friends, who we stayed with for the first two nights. We discussed current Irish and US politics and economics as well as learning more about Irish life. We found our hosts to be welcoming and engaging, happy to share their opinions and genuinely interested in ours.

For much of our trip, we had the privilege of participating in IJYM, at the Moyallon Centre in Portadown, Northern Ireland. Quaker Youth from all over Ireland, aged 14-18, came together to participate. The program was run by a committee of youth. We were impressed by their involvement in planning the sessions and activities throughout the week and by the support the group of youth gave to their peers in leadership positions. There was an amazing evenness and balance to the group activities creating a sense of cohesion and connection. In contrast with what we have often experienced in our own JYM, we felt a more unified and shared sense of purpose to their gathering.

They played a number of games that were similar to those that connect us here. They were as eager to learn new games from us as we were to learn ones from them. We returned with Airport, Whomp 'em and Wild Men and left them with Prui and Standing Ovation. Everyone felt very at home and welcomed, especially those of us new to the group. Continued contact through Facebook affirms the open and caring community that they have formed. In these ways our JYM program and their JYM program are similar.

It was interesting for us to see the smoothness and ease of the multiple business meetings the youth held. Quaker Business Meeting, conducted in an efficient, yet respectful and helpful manner is one of the practices we would like to use more effectively in our own NYYM JYM. We were also inspired by an informative and enjoyable session called "Quakers in Space" which we brought back and used successfully this year in our high school group.

Participating in IJYM with the Irish young friends made us realize how much we get out of our time together with other young friends. We were glad to see that Quaker youth in other countries have this great opportunity, just as we have at Powell House and NYYM JYM. IJYM also helped us see that the role of a clerk is to benefit and guide their community not govern it. More broadly, being a Quaker leader means taking action when you feel called to do so and talking with other people about your concerns and working to form solutions together.

#### 2017-07-56 1st and 2nd grade group

The first and second grade group came to Morse Hall at Silver Bay, New York by car and by van to celebrate God, to have fun, to be with family, and to look at nature. We went to the nature center, and to the beach with the high schoolers. To make the Peaceable Kingdom, we used paint, paper, markers, crayons, cardboard, and scissors. When we listened to the stream it said calm down; it was peaceable; it sang a song to us. We learned what games each other enjoyed and did not enjoy by playing everybody's it, blob tag, and Mrs. Mumbly. We felt the energy of the trees with green man. We liked being together.

#### 2017-07-57 3rd and 4th grade group

The 3/4s gathered t created our Peaceable "something"-dom. We were greatly enriched by games, the turtle "tiny-mo", our lovely bracelets and face painting for the Fun(d) Fair, the beach, and our inspiring visitors. We survived rain, cold weather, and bad jokes (by certain adults). We went on to build our "something"-doms, that became peaceable, using shadow puppets and a light box. Our kids will now show their puppets and we will hold them in the light!

#### 2017-07-58 5th and 6th grade group

Welcome friends,

today we will express our epistle in skit form. We will also explain what we did throughout the week.

On Monday we met in Munn Hall and learned each others' names. We also created our committees. Unfortunately we ended up using too many plastic cups in what ended being known as the "great cup massacre." It raged on for three whole days, with cups wounded and dead, left and right.

On Tuesday it was beach day, and also a special visitor came. The special visitor was Nadine. Nadine talked to us about phobias and how most conflicts were caused by not being near each other and avoiding each other. Then, we headed off to the beach.

On Wednesday we had a lot of fun out on the water, and throwing sponges into Quakers' faces. Early in the morning, during JYM, we walked down as a group to the boat house to go canoeing. On our way out we were all laughing from the huge waves that were crashing into our boats! About halfway between the boat house and Slim Point, we connected our boats and had a moment of waiting worship.

When we were coming back, we saw a huge groundhog, and some of us chased after it, but sadly it hopped into the bushes. But before that, a military plane flew about 50 feet above the water. In the end, we still wonder what happened to that groundhog.

After lunch was the fun fair. At the fun fair, our booths were the sponge toss and the lemon-lime challenge. We had a lot of fun helping and supporting Powell House.

On Thursday we practiced meditation. We all went in our imaginations to our peaceable kingdoms.

We also decided who going to be what in the epistle. Even though no everyone could have a spot, we listened to each other to make it possible.

On Friday, the last day of JYM, we went down to the boat house to sing and do worship. After that we said goodbye to all of our friends that we made this week, and some that we're not going to see for a long time.

## 2017-07-59. 7-8-9 Group

eddy: this week at silver bay was indeed interesting...

Maia: On Monday, we spent the day getting to know each other using a few name whips, and then our guest speaker Nadine came to visit. She spoke to us about how she helps introduce violent and closed off communities to Quakerism and showed us how we could too. She gave us ideas for more name whips. we also played games like sun and umbrella, honey if you love me, and a big wind blows. We had another name whip.

Corina: Tuesday, we started out the day with committee meetings before heading down to the nature center where we touched live creatures, and started a cult based around a turtle named "tiny mo" \*max screams\* Chris and Mike were inducted \*cough\* included too (we played games).

Matt: the following day, we had a calming guided meditation lead by the amazing Abby; meanwhile, some of us played fainting goat tag, don't ask... we proceeded to take a trips to da beechs to shred some gnarly waves dude (said by Matt) After that happened we went to subject ourselves to an onslaught of water balloons and silly string aka the fun fair, \*patrick\* fun fair with a ph \*maxwell qq\* so puuun faiiiiiir \*eddy\* PUNNSSSS

Pippin: On Thursday, we played amoeba tag and everyone fell. After we got up and migrated to the lake where our attempted water worship was thwarted by evil sentient rain... don't ask about that either. Then we went back to Field Memorial where we had snacks and tried to finish our worship. Unfortunately that was also ruined by strange alarm noises ...

Corina: we couldn't think of any good jokes so I was told to do this in an accent. On Friday however, confusion persisted despite everyone's exhaustion. We played games, worked on the epistle \*cough Olive\* disaster. Later we went down to the boat house and sang quakerly songs. 'Twas a good day.

and our new clerks for next year, as nominated are Josie Mack and Talullah Klein.

## 2017-07-60 Senior high group.

High School Junior Yearly Meeting Epistle  
By Irena Rosenberg and Juliet Ramey-Lariviere

It was a rainy Monday when we met at the Boathouse  
Learned each other's names and worshipped quiet as a mouse  
We traveled a bunch right before lunch  
Each chose an airport, but our game was cut short by a report

Next day we did more much more than before  
We spoke of the draft and filled a spacecraft  
With historical Quakers, we were the makers  
Of a new land which would be grand

Wednesday rolled in and began with Nadine  
We listened and learned about the unseen  
With a bounce in our step we met our buddy first grader  
Then swam and played and walked them back later

On Thursday we discussed politics and divisions  
We created a new party and voiced our decisions  
Then we split  
some joined business others used clay  
The sculptors went boating and the worshippers thought of pay

Last day we sat down and did worship sharing  
We reflected on our community and how it is caring  
Then we played games to pass the time  
Creating the peaceable kingdom in rhyme  
Then we gathered to sing altogether  
Before we went to lunch in the beautiful weather

2017-07-62 Epistle

New York Yearly Meeting Epistle, 2017

To Friends everywhere:

New York Yearly Meeting met at Silver Bay, New York, on the shores of Lake George, on the seventh month, from 23rd day through the 29th day, in this our 322nd gathering for Summer Sessions. In attendance were 450 Friends including 112 in Junior Yearly Meeting (JYM), from babies to high school. The week began rainy and unusually cold, but some sun and warmth eventually made its way to us.

As we came together, we acknowledged that the lands we gather on were the Mohawk Hunting Grounds, shared for hunting by many native nations under the treaty, or “wampum,” of “The Dish With One Spoon,” that welcomed all those who came to hunt in peace. We thanked the Mohawks and other nations for their care of the lands and the lake.

We reflected on the theme of “Bringing the Peaceable Kingdom to a Turbulent World.” In our day-long Meeting for Discernment we experienced deep worship and shared spirit-filled messages that lifted our hearts. Since we established Meetings for Discernment ten years ago, we have come to find in them a strong source of spiritual renewal. Friends said that faith provided them the strength to encounter the challenges of our times. The State of Society report also found that our monthly meetings felt supported in turbulent times by faith, love, and community; Friends were urged to acknowledge our struggles as well as our successes when we tell our stories.

Our plenary speaker, Nadine Hoover, formerly of Alfred Meeting (NYYM), is a coordinator for Friends Peace Teams. She looked back over our centuries of faith in action and called on us to renew our lived connection to our testimonies. Her peace-building work has grown out of Friends’ commitment to listening; to speaking truthfully and lovingly; and to setting aside privilege. Our commitment to truth-telling and integrity as a community is essential to our ability to build peace. She said we must denounce racism and prejudice publicly, in order to restore

the power of our peacemaking. She reminded us that although we may feel discouraged there have been many advances in social justice, and Quakers have had a part in them. A number of us participated in "Roots of Injustice; Seeds of Change: Moving Toward Right Relationship with Native Peoples," a program to dramatize how the Doctrine of Christian Discovery shaped the colonization of America. We were asked to inhabit, with our bodies, hearts, and minds, the experience of genocide and cultural destruction. This trauma is still being passed on to current generations of our native neighbors.

We celebrated the work of our energetic Field Secretaries and ARCH (Aging Resources Consultation and Help) Director in finding new and creative ways to bring us together. Friends approved a pay-as-led system for attending Summer Sessions, drawn by the spiritual importance of being an inclusive community. The Pay-As-Led Ad Hoc Committee will work to develop a specific plan for implementation by Fall Sessions in order to institute it for Summer Sessions 2018. We affirm that, when it comes to gatherings of Friends in search of divine guidance, everyone is welcome to the table. We continued our new practice of starting our morning with Community Worship. Friends celebrated the coming together of all ages, with song, story, and silent spirit-led worship.

JYM gathered by age in five groups. (Next year there will be a sixth group for 3-5 year olds.) Many high schoolers stepped into their leading to learn Quaker process this year, accompanied by "Whisper Buddies" who helped illuminate our practices during Meeting for Business.

We strove to conduct Meetings for Business in a disciplined and spirit-led way. We also met in Worship Sharing Groups, Interest Groups, and other gatherings around common concerns. We came together informally for Contra Dancing and singing on the porch. A Café Night, a Tag Sale, and the Fun(d) Fair raised close to \$7,000 for Powell House and the Sharing Fund.

Many young adults took joy this Sessions in serving the community on committees and in JYM, among other ways, though some expressed sorrow that more were not able to attend. Friends continue to labor with how best to support the presence of Young Adults among us.

Peter Cook, Executive Director of the New York State Council of Churches, spoke with us about bridging social divisions so we can act together with other faiths against injustice.

Late in the Sessions, a Friend acknowledged that the State of Society report said incorrectly that Ithaca Meeting had created the Friends Center for Racial Justice. The report has been corrected to recognize that the Center is a ministry of the Yearly Meeting's Task Group on Racism. We were reminded to take care that the European-American perspective not dominate our stories.

We expressed deepest gratitude to Christopher Sammond, our outgoing General Secretary of thirteen years, for his years of service to the Yearly Meeting. He led our Bible Study this year, considering the book of Esther. Esther illustrates that empire reduces people to replaceable parts, whereas Jesus viewed people as a family, large enough to include all those who do God's work. Christopher posed the question, What seeds of empire are within us?

Steven Mohlke, our new General Secretary, comes to us to help us realize our priorities, bringing strong experience with Quaker discernment and management in his monthly meeting (Ithaca), Friends General Conference, and other settings. In our last Community Worship, led by young Friends, we sang "The Magic Penny" and passed pennies among the worshippers. At the end, everyone had touched a penny. So Love passed among those gathered in worship, and we will take it from Summer Sessions out into the world.

Lucinda Antrim, Clerk