

The 321st New York Yearly Meeting Summer Sessions

Minutes, July 25-29, 2016

Silver Bay Association, Silver Bay NY

Monday, July 25, 2016; 10:45 a.m.

Lucinda Antrim (Scarsdale), Clerk

Jeffrey Aaron (New Brunswick), Assistant Clerk

Melanie-Claire Mallison (Ithaca), Recording Clerk

Karen Snare (Bulls Head-Oswego), Reading Clerk

2016-07-01. Last night, our Opening Worship began our 321st session by celebrating our theme “Nurturing the Blessed Community at Every Age.” Lucinda Antrim (Scarsdale), clerk, welcomed us: “We’ll soon, in a spirit of celebration and gratitude for our time together, hear our roll call, and see that we have come together as one across regions, across ages, across sexual orientations, across understandings of God—a few among the many ways that humans differ. One of my favorite quotes is from a theologian named Raimundo Panikkar, who said that the wider the diversity in a community, the deeper the underlying unity.” She introduced the Circle of Care and Concern and encouraged us to read the new document on personal interactions, both efforts to support our time together at sessions. Our roll call proved that indeed, f/Friends of all ages had traveled from far and wide to have all of our regions represented. The scriptural reading drew vocal ministry that spoke across the ages, while the introduction of our Junior Yearly Meeting coordinators and volunteers proved our care for our young friends. We ended with the singing of “Simple Gifts.”

2016-07-02. This morning, we gathered again in worship. Our clerk introduced those at the clerks’ table, reviewed today’s agenda and included a reminder to read over the Consent Agenda, which will be taken up on Thursday morning.

2016-07-03. The clerk welcomed visitors: Jane E. Houser visiting from Live Oak Friends Meeting, Houston, Texas, South Central Yearly Meeting; and Ruth Reber visiting from Chestnut Hill Friends Meeting, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (PhYM), on behalf of Friends General Conference. Ruth’s letter of introduction is [attached](#).

2016-07-04. Irma Guthrie (Perry City) presented the second reading of *Faith and Practice*, Sections G and H. Changes included updating language that referenced Representative Meetings (now Spring / Fall Sessions), removing the McCutchen Home (which has been sold, with the proceeds now funding the Friends Foundation for the Aging), and other such corrections. Friends approved the [attached](#) changes to *Faith and Practice*.

2016-07-05. Irma continued with a second reading of how we make changes in *Faith and Practice*:

Proposed revisions to *Faith & Practice* may originate in a monthly or regional meeting or a yearly meeting body. When the proposed revision has been seasoned by the Committee to Revise *Faith & Practice* and approved by Ministry Coordinating Committee, the Committee to Revise *Faith & Practice* may bring the proposed revision to any yearly meeting session for a first reading. After being brought forward the first time, the proposed revision is brought for a second reading and final approval to a subsequent yearly meeting session.

Friends approved this change to our *Faith and Practice*.

2016-07-06. Christopher Sammond (Poplar Ridge), serving our yearly meeting as our general secretary, offered the [attached](#) written report along with his vocal ministry to the yearly meeting. Christopher also introduced our new Children and Youth Field Secretary, Melinda Wenner Bradley (included in his written report). Melinda spoke to us of her joy of being with us and her beginning to travel amongst NYYM Friends. She spoke of the Partner Project—an opportunity for YM staff to experiment with how to better ground and anchor our children, youth, and young families into the life of our monthly meetings. Working in concert with New England Yearly Meeting, Melinda will collaborate with six monthly meetings on outreach, community building, and learning from one another how to better teach our Quaker children. Friends were encouraged to speak with Melinda directly if their meeting is interested in participating in this project. She also invited folks to three opportunities to meet with her this week. Christopher ended by reading the story “Teachers Everywhere.” Friends received these reports and Christopher’s and Melinda’s ministry.

2016-07-07. Chad Cianfrani, new Head of Oakwood Friends School, was introduced and said a few words about his thirteen years at Oakwood and his year as Head. He looks forward to continuing to work with New York Yearly Meeting and the wonderful young people who attend Oakwood. Friends spoke to the vital work of Friends’ schools and Oakwood in particular.

2016-07-08. Steven Davison (Central Philadelphia Meeting) speaking as the out-going NYYM communications director and continuing website master, introduced and showed the new NYYM logo. He announced that Sarah Way is our interim communications director. Friends spoke to their gratitude for Steve’s service to the yearly meeting.

2016-07-09. The minutes were read and approved as the morning progressed. Friends settled back into worship, after which announcements were made.

Monday, July 25, 2016; 7:40 p.m.

Lucinda Antrim (Scarsdale), Clerk
Jeffrey Aaron (New Brunswick), Assistant Clerk
Melanie-Claire Mallison (Ithaca), Recording Clerk
Sylke Jackson (Rockland), Reading Clerk

2016-07-10. Friends gathered in worship. The clerk introduced those at the clerks' table and urged us to be present to our work together throughout the evening.

2016-07-11. Our reading clerk read the memorial minute for Rosa Covington Packard, May 30, 1935–February 22, 2016. Rosa was known for her fierce support of the Quaker testimony of peace, her determined war tax resistance, and her years as an educational consultant to Montessori schools. Rosa became a member of Stamford-Greenwich Meeting in 1975, and transferred her membership to Purchase Meeting in 1989, where she was an active, frank and loving presence. Rosa created the Friends Peace Center and spent her life witnessing to our peace testimony, her tax resistance, and her faithfulness to God's call. Out of the silence, Friends spoke to Rosa's generous nature, her authentic grounding in our Quaker faith, and her saying, "Every dollar sent to the military is a bullet meant for someone's child."

2016-07-12. Jeffrey Aaron (New Brunswick), convenor of the Leadings and Priorities Support Working Group, presented their report, [attached](#). The report includes their new primary focus reflected in the new working group name—Leadings and Priorities *Support* Working Group—and their new charge focusing on supporting Friends throughout the yearly meeting—committees and meetings—as they go forward with their work with our yearly meeting priorities at heart. The report was received.

2016-07-13. The minutes up to this point were read and approved with corrections.

2016-07-14. Angela Hopkins (Ithaca) began the report for the White Privilege Conference Task Group ([attached](#)). Angela said that although the conference is over for this year, and this Task Group is now laid down, the work of eradicating racism continues. She said that NYYM has five standing groups working on antiracism and racial justice—the Black Concerns, Prisons, and Indian Affairs committees, the Task Group on Racism in NYYM, and European American Quakers Working to End Racism Working Group. Angela said Friends have many gifts and she hopes they will find their way to continue the work in NYYM.

Emily Boardman (Cornwall) reported that she came away from those three days with a profound understanding she did not have before of the yoke of white privilege shared by us who identify as white. The words she heard from a young white man still resonate: "I want my humanity back."

Leila Archibald (Manhattan) spoke about how hard it is to realize that you think you know a lot about a topic, but then find, in conversations, that you don't know as much as you thought. She learned about the blinders we sometimes wear when we find a situation is too bright or too ugly.

Robin Mallison Alpern (Scarsdale, sojourning at Amawalk) noted that when Christopher Sammond asked for 100 members of NYYM to attend the White Privilege Conference, she thought he'd "gone 'round the bend"—but with organization, the goal was met and exceeded. Robin said attendance at WPC was not enough. The Task Group urges NYYM to be in action, working to understand and undo the racism embedded in our Society.

Friends spoke from the floor about listening with new ears, learning that things white people take for granted—like benefiting from the World War II GI bill, being selected for housing programs, and finding acceptance of one’s cultural language—are things that have been and are denied to people of color. Friends received the report.

2016-07-15. Sara Niccoli (Brooklyn) brought the report for the New York State Council of Churches, [attached](#). The Council has been working hard on making a living wage real, along with paid family leave. Friends received the report.

2016-07-16. Barbara Menzel (New Brunswick) reported for the Personnel Committee and made several staff announcements. First, Melinda Wenner Bradley has been hired to fill the new position of Children and Youth Field Secretary. Second, our communications director Steven Davison has retired and Sarah Way (Brooklyn) is now our interim communications director, filling many of those responsibilities. Steve will continue to work on our website on a contractual basis. The search for a full time communications director continues. Third, Helen Garay Toppins is celebrating her 25th year as our associate secretary. Barbara noted that our staff work more hours than we could ever be aware of and we are grateful for their dedication and service.

2016-07-17. Christopher Sammond, general secretary, related a powerful encounter with the Divine in which he was directed to resign as general secretary. He was told to give one year’s notice at Summer Sessions 2016. Christopher brought this leading to his committee of care twice and was supported in the truth of his leading. He then took it to his Supervisory Committee and the Personnel Committee. He noted that his resignation is a perfect time for General Services Coordinating Committee and NYYM to evaluate and possibly restructure yearly meeting staffing. Although Christopher has often stated that the current job description of general secretary is not sustainable at 40 hours a week, he stressed that he was not leaving due to any sense of dissatisfaction or negativity, and that he is not leaving to pursue other work. He is as yet not clear what his next steps will be. He was clear that he was called to this service years ago, and he is clear that he is being called out of it now. His statement is [attached](#).

2016-07-18. After some discussion, minutes 14–17 were laid aside to be considered for approval later in the week. Friends settled into expectant worship. (See minute 2016-07-26 for approval.)

Wednesday, July 27, 2016; 10:45 a.m.

*Lucinda Antrim (Scarsdale), Clerk
Jeffrey Aaron (New Brunswick), Assistant Clerk
Karen Way (New Brunswick), Recording Clerk
Karen Snare (Bulls Head-Oswego), Reading Clerk*

2016-07-19. The meeting opened with silent worship.

2016-07-20. The clerk welcomed Friends, introduced the clerks’ table and reviewed the

agenda.

2016-07-21. The reading clerk read a memorial minute for William Sims, member of Poplar Ridge Friends Meeting, born 9/6/1933, died 6/26/15. As his memorial minute stated in so many ways, William (Bill) Sims was a special man. Imprisoned for 43 years until the day he died, Bill first attended a Quaker worship group in 1975. This group was the first-ever Friends meeting for worship held in any NY State Prison. In 1978, the worship group became the Auburn Prison Preparative Meeting through Farmington-Scipio Regional Meeting. Bill was a faithful attender and became clerk. Later, as his circle of friends expanded, he became a member of Poplar Ridge Meeting. Bill attended the second-ever Alternatives to Violence Workshop in a New York State prison at Auburn in 1978. In subsequent years he facilitated workshops, and provided the communication and trust-building essential to the program's success. Today there are active AVP programs in 18 New York State prisons and Quaker worship groups in 11. While serving a life sentence, he completed a bachelor's degree from Syracuse University, and a Master's degree from the University of Buffalo. He developed remarkable artistic skill and was known for his beautiful greeting cards. He met, courted, and married Dorothy Gowin, a member of Syracuse Friends Meeting. Bill was imprisoned primarily in maximum security prisons for 43 years. He had no power, no resources, and limited contacts and telephone calls. He did have the resources of a thoroughly good man, and that was enough. He demonstrated the power of the Quaker words: "Let us see what Love can do."

Friends spoke in response, remembering Bill's loving tenderness within a broken justice system. He communicated the joy and freedom that can come when a person gives up hope and accepts the full richness of what is. His sentence of 25 years to life was prolonged through 18 years of unjustified parole denial. That he died in prison is a tragedy for him and for all of us who missed knowing him. To his last days, he shared the transforming power of the Spirit with everyone he could reach.

2016-07-22. Due to time constraints, minutes were not read or approved during this session. Meeting closed with quiet worship, followed by the plenary presentation by the NYYM staff.

Thursday, July 28, 2016; 10:45 a.m.

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

2016-07-23. The meeting opened with silent worship.

2016-07-24. The clerk welcomed Friends, reviewed the agenda, and introduced the clerks' table.

2016-07-25. Steve Tamm, the Executive Director of Silver Bay Association, welcomed Friends to summer at Silver Bay.

2016-07-26. Minutes 2016-07-14 through 2016-07-18 for Monday were read and approved.

2016-07-27. Minutes for Wednesday July 27 were read and approved.

2016-07-28. John Cooley (Central Finger Lakes) introduced the business of the General Services Coordinating Committee (GSCC) by describing the scope of work the GSCC undertakes.

John announced that GSCC will be forming an ad hoc committee to re-examine staffing and administrative structures for the yearly meeting. The committee will also consider how to recruit new staff as we prepare for Christopher Sammond's resignation as general secretary. The ad hoc committee will include members from Personnel, the Supervisory Committee for the general secretary, the Leadings and Priorities Support Working Group, Trustees, and others. The committee will reach out to staff and others for input, and may possibly engage a consultant in the Quaker management sphere.

GSCC has also discussed with Nurture Coordinating Committee the financial status and organizational placement of ARCH (Aging Resources, Consultation and Help). The two coordinating committees will give a joint report at a business session tomorrow.

2016-07-29. Paula McClure (Montclair) presented the NYYM treasurer's report as of June 30, 2016 ([attached](#)). Receipts are at 51% of budget, while last year they were at 44% of budget. Total disbursements are at 40% of budget, the same percentage as last year. Paula said the percentage of income received is the highest in 25 years. She attributed the improvement to several factors: the one-time infusion of the Young Friends in Residence fund into the operating budget; the decision last year to allow surplus money left at the end of one year to be carried into the next; and increased income from monthly meetings. Friends received the report.

2016-07-30. Frederick Dettmer (Purchase) reported for the NYYM Trustees (report [attached](#)). During 2015–2016, Trustees worked to enhance transparency and accountability in the yearly meeting's business affairs. Activities included developing new by-laws for the corporation; sorting through the many trust funds and bequests of the YM; working with GSCC and the Audit Committee to manage the current audit of the YM's finances; honing NYYM's financial guidelines; and improving financial information on the YM website. Trustees also oversee various properties owned by the YM but not now used by the yearly meeting. They are exploring how to dispose of these assets.

Fred described the process by which the Trustees reviewed the trust funds managed by the YM. The Trustees sought the original documents and tried to better match the initial intent with the organizations now in existence. Many funds are not strictly designated, but over time their income has been directed to various committees and organizations. The goal of reallocating the income from these funds into the Operating budget is to increase transparency and to ensure that all possible income—and all

possible decisions about income allocation—will be in the hands of the YM, rather than decided separately by the Trustees.

2016-07-31. Mary Williams (Bulls Head-Oswego) presented the NYYM Trust Fund treasurer's report as of June 30, 2016 ([attached](#)). The report details the many funds of NYYM and disbursements in the first half of the year. The value of all funds added together is over \$5,382,000. As of June 30, 2016, disbursements to the NYYM operating budget, NYYM committees, Powell House, Oakwood School, and other groups are over \$138,000.

2016-07-32. Mary Williams presented the results of realigning and reallocating (full details [attached](#)). First, for explicitly designated or restricted funds, income has been redesignated to be clearly in line with donor designations.

Second, for unrestricted funds (funds with no designation), the Trustees are planning to send the income directly to the operating budget.

Specifically, starting in 2017, the income from several unrestricted funds that are now assigned to committees or organizations will be directed to the operating budget and used according to yearly meeting priorities as determined in the budget setting process. This affects income from two funds currently assigned to Powell House (Ella L Burdge and Emma Cheeseman funds), two for World Ministries (Loder Chapel and Sutton-Haviland), and one for Oakwood Friends School (Skaneateles Fund).

Also, starting in 2016, the income from the unrestricted fund Lockport, currently assigned to the Advancement Committee, will be directed to the operating fund.

Mary noted that the 2017 budget process is expected to include a plan to keep Oakwood and Powell House funded at a level comparable to previous income.

Friends received the reports and approved the reallocation of funds.

2016-07-33. Minutes to this point were read and approved.

2016-07-34. The clerk noted that the Consent Agenda will come before the body tomorrow, and Friends are advised to read and consider the items before then.

2017-07-35. Rima Segal (Rochester) from the Epistle Committee read the following excerpts from the 2015 and 2016 Epistles from Sweden Yearly Meeting.

(2015) Some forty Friends and friends of Friends, adults and children, from the whole of Sweden as well as representatives from five different yearly meetings, gathered under the theme "Equality—Approach and Application." The Quaker testimony to equality is very relevant in a social development that draws us towards an even greater inequality. In his talk on Friday, British Quaker and keynote speaker Martin Wilkinson told us about the connection between economic inequality, inadequate public health, and social problems, based on the book *The Spirit Level* (Richard Wilkinson & Kate Pickett, 2010).

(2016) In different discussion forums, as well as musical dissonance games and role-play, we have worked with our theme: "Non-violence: Possibilities and Limitations."

Rather than non-violence, our invited guest, Jalka, from Austria, talked about learning to quarrel, so that we meet in the conflict and become more human—"This is just as important as learning to brush your teeth." She said that Quakers often equate conflict

with violence, but that avoiding confrontation is also a form of violence. Instead we can be more real for each other by saying how things are, listening to ourselves, and understanding “the other.”

2016-07-36. The remaining minutes of this session were approved.

2016-07-37. After announcements, we closed with quiet worship.

Friday, July 29, 2016, 10:45 a.m.

*Lucinda Antrim (Scarsdale), Clerk
Jeffrey Aaron (New Brunswick), Assistant Clerk
Andrew Mead von Salis (Brooklyn), Recording Clerk
Karen Snare (Bulls Head - Oswego), Reading Clerk*

2016-07-38. The clerk called Friends into worship. From a time of quiet, she welcomed Friends, introduced the clerks at the facing table, and began the agenda.

2016-07-39. Irma Guthrie (Perry City), clerk of the Ministry Coordinating Committee, introduced Marissa Badgley (Poughkeepsie), who presented the State of the Society Report for the calendar year 2015. On behalf of herself and her co-drafter Joyce Weaver (Conscience Bay), Marissa told us that it aims to show as well as tell the state of our Society. More monthly meetings than usual participated, though not all, and some themes did not rise. Marissa asked us to consider these areas for growth in the coming year as we look forward to expressing the state of our meetings in 2016.

Above all, the report fully affirmed that "we are here and we are not going away." Among many slides Marissa displayed on a big screen to reinforce the details were two “word clouds.” One, in the shape of a dove, contained key words from the report, capturing the many characteristics of our living presence. The other contained our younger Friends' words on Quakerism. With all our successes and shortcomings, she concluded, we remain faithfully present.

Friends sang and spoke to the power, beauty and challenge in the report and its presentation. The report was received.

2016-07-40. In accordance with our consent agenda practice, the clerk reported that the previously posted contents had required no amendments. Friends therefore approved the following four items (minutes 41-44).

2016-07-41. The Financial Services Committee *Handbook* page was approved. (*Handbook* page [attached](#)).

2016-07-42. The report on Interim actions by the clerk and general secretary was received. (Report [attached](#).)

2016-07-43. Nominations for appointment to service are approved. (Report [attached](#).)

2016-07-44. Releases from service are approved. (Report [attached](#).)

2016-07-45. 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 formerly affiliated with New York Yearly Meeting. Thus, Friends heard and approved the following three appointments:

State of Society

Class of 2017	Lily Bergstein (co-opted)	No meeting affiliation
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Elsie K. Powell House, Inc.

Class of 2017	Esther Gilbert (co-opt)	Philadelphia YM
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Indian Affairs Committee

Class of 2017	Kay Olan	No meeting affiliation
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Kay Olan is a Mohawk elder who will serve as an advisor to the Indian Affairs Committee, connecting it to traditional Haudenosaunee and other nearby Native communities, so that the Committee and the yearly meeting may better serve as allies to them. This appears to be the first such appointment in the history of the Indian Affairs Committee, which was originally convened in 1794.

2016-07-46. Rima Segal (Rochester), for the Epistle Committee, read the draft Epistle proposed for our issuance to Friends everywhere. It encapsulates many salient experiences of our week and articulates their significance to us. Our life as a blessed community is celebrated. The draft was to come back to us for consideration and action later today.

2016-07-47. Steven Mohlke (Ithaca) invited us to give particular attention this coming year to the Gathering of Friends General Conference, of which Steve will be a co-clerk, to take place in New York State July 2 through 8, 2017, at Niagara University. Some ways in which Friends may participate require action by this September, and registration to attend will open in April. Steve spoke of hearing his own calling to serve, and asked us to listen for our own.

2016-07-48. Robert (Sunfire) Kazmayer (Easton) reported to us on his travels, for which we had issued our travel minute. The 2015 Parliament of the World's Religions in Salt Lake City, Utah, changed his life. There were seven plenary events, each with many speakers. Sunfire attended them all, though no one could possibly experience all of the presenters at the Parliament sessions. He himself presented a Quakerly worship sharing event at which he offered queries on the environment. Sunfire encouraged us all to reach out likewise to members of other religions with our "message that peace and love must become universal values of humanity."

Friends received Sunfire's report and the return of our travel minute. His report is [attached](#).

2016-07-49. The memorial minute for Richard Goodman was read by the reading clerk. Dick lived by, and often quoted, Jesus' injunction that "when you did it for the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it for me" (Matthew 25). Dick's sixty years of devotion to the American Friends Service Committee and its projects, his leadership in

Westbury Meeting and his reinvigoration efforts at Manhasset Meeting, as well as his work to reconcile and unite liberal and orthodox Quaker factions, inspired us to move upon our faith so as to deliver its power through our works.

Friends rose to remember aloud the humor, hope and warmth with which Dick drew others in to the work we need to do.

2016-07-50. The minutes of this session were read, corrected and approved in stages during the session.

Friday, July 29, 2016; 3:00 p.m.

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

2016-07-51. The meeting opened with silent worship.

2016-07-52. The clerk welcomed Friends, introduced the clerks' table, and reviewed the agenda.

2016-07-53 . Jillian Smith (Saratoga) introduced a multimedia presentation on the 2016 World Plenary of the Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC). The stated purpose of the FWCC is to encourage fellowship among all the branches of the Religious Society of Friends. The 2016 plenary was a joyful family reunion of the Society of Friends held in Pisac, Peru, the sacred valley of the Incas high in the Andes Mountains. Jillian introduced a video epistle showing the beauty of the setting, the geographical scope of the attendees, and the joy and hope they created.

Jillian shared her own experience at the plenary trying to mix Bible study with unprogrammed worship. Her words for spirituality were very different from those of people raised in Bible-based Christianity. Nevertheless, during their time together, she found images that crossed the divide.

Sylke Jackson (Rockland) described how the Consultation on Sustaining Life on Earth awakened her to the urgency of the crisis of global warming. To move Quakers out of their comfort zone, every yearly meeting is asked to take two concrete actions on sustainability within the next 12 months. Sylke expressed her hope that NYYM will move to pull all funding from fossil fuels.

Emily Provance (Fifteenth Street) asked us to picture 65 Young Adult Friends meeting in one room with no common language, no named leaders, and no shared procedures, to answer the question: what does spirit have in mind for us Quakers? Despite these obstacles, at the end of three hours, participants had a multilingual working group with elders and a common mission of communication and connection.

Isabella Aguirre (Purchase) described the value of letting young people experience for themselves the wideness of the world, the richness inside themselves, and the power of

Quakerism.

Mike Clark (Old Chatham) and the participants thanked the yearly meeting for essential financial support. He announced World Quaker Day, sponsored by FWCC and planned for October 2, 2016. He also announced that the next FWCC meeting in our area will be the World Committee for Consultation—Section of the Americas, to be held in Pennsylvania in March 2017.

Friends received the report, which is [attached](#).

2016-07-54 .John Cooley (Central Finger Lakes) clerk of General Services Coordinating Committee, accompanied by Deborah Wood (Purchase) clerk of Nurture Coordinating Committee, described the financial situation facing ARCH—Aging Resources Consultation and Help. The work of ARCH is highly valuable to the yearly meeting. They would like to finish the year with the full-time director still on board, but there is not enough money in the ARCH budget to do that. The lack of funds stems from grants not received, donations lower than hoped, and a successful program growing faster than expected.

After consultation between General Services and Nurture, John reported that General Services will consolidate the ARCH program into the YM structure, placing ARCH employees under the oversight of Personnel Committee. General Services can find \$10,000 in the current budget, which we believe will be matched by the Friends Foundation for the Aging. General Services can help set up a business plan to help ARCH navigate the near future. Also, the future place and functioning of ARCH will be among the elements to be considered by the ad hoc committee that will consider NYYM staffing and structure.

Because there will be no audit in 2016, there is some money in the budget line to move over to ARCH. Because both budget lines are within General Services control, John expressed his belief that the action does not require approval by the body.

Deb Wood affirmed the value of the resources provided to the YM by ARCH. She believes it will be helpful to bring the ARCH employees into the YM system and policies.

Friends expressed concerns about the future sustainability of ARCH and questioned whether a decision involving a sum as large as \$10,000 should be at the discretion of a coordinating committee. Friends hoped for deeper consideration of these issues, and further reporting in Fall Sessions.

Friends received the report.

2016-07-55. Minutes of the session were approved to this point.

2016-07-56 Ann Kjellberg (Fifteenth Street) gave a second reading of the 2016 Epistle. Friends approved the Epistle ([attached](#)).

2016-07-57. Andy von Salis (Brooklyn) presented a statement ([attached](#)) from Witness Coordinating Committee supporting Sara Niccoli, a member of Brooklyn Meeting who is a candidate for the New York State Senate. Sara has been criticized for standing respectfully silent during the Pledge of Allegiance at public meetings. The proposed statement explains the Biblical base for the Quaker testimony against swearing oaths, and

supports Sara's actions as consistent with religious witness as a member of New York Yearly Meeting. Friends approved the statement, which will be sent out by the clerk.

2016-07-58. The remaining minutes of this session were approved.

2016-07-59. After announcements, we closed with quiet worship.

Friday, July 29, 2016, 6:45 p.m.

*Lucinda Antrim (Scarsdale), Clerk
Jeffrey Aaron (New Brunswick), Assistant Clerk
Andrew Mead von Salis (Brooklyn), Recording Clerk
Karen Snare (Bulls Head-Oswego), Reading Clerk*

2016-07-60. The clerk, in convening our closing session, acknowledged that the children present expected the Junior Yearly Meeting to lead the agenda by recognizing their leaders and presenting a celebratory delivery of their epistles. But she asked them to open themselves to an item that our afternoon business session had not had time to reach, a reading of a memorial minute, which exemplifies a unique element in Friends meetings' practice. A short silence fell.

2016-07-61. The reading clerk read the memorial minute for Boyce Benge of Brooklyn Meeting. Boyce was recognized in his youth in North Carolina for his artistic talent, which led to a summer scholarship in New York City and to higher education back in the South. He was open and humble as a gay man and recovering alcoholic, as he created cutting-edge art while living off private commissions designing art frames. He was a powerful example and support to recovering alcoholics as a devoted participant for life in Alcoholics Anonymous settings, and to gay people who suffered discrimination or disease.

Boyce was remembered by Friends as a gentleman, a conscientious objector, and a lovingly generous Friend. His readings of our Epistles, and his ability to respond to their ideas by making art of them, are fondly remembered.

2016-07-62. Melanie-Claire Mallison (Ithaca), clerk of Sessions Committee, reported on the participation in our 2016 Summer Sessions; 476 registrants, 106 of whom were youth. She also reported on the money raised for Powell House and the Sharing Fund (\$4,781.50 from Cafe' Night, \$456.29 from the Fun(d) Fair, and over \$1,300 from the Tagless Tag Sale) for a total of over \$6,500. Melanie-Claire led a short "call and response" and as she invoked each example of the diversity of people and styles among us, the Meeting responded, "We are here!"

2016-07-63. Rebecca Wolf (Rochester), co-coordinator of the Junior Yearly Meeting, invited the first and second graders to the stage. They carried on an enormous webbed dream-catcher circle adorned with the symbols of nature creatures, books, spirit animals and spirit people, among many others. Led by Will Tesdell and Faith Brzostoski, they sang of all God's critters' places in the choir. Lots of responsive sounds from Friends to

each verse rewarded them.

2016-07-64. The third and fourth graders followed, filing out of the wings. They contributed by turns the events of their week—including a cartwheel. Their guiding adults were David Gerhard, Jen Morgan-Davie, and Avery Johnson.

2016-07-65. A parade of fifth and sixth graders launched into the story of the week they had experienced, punctuated by "Why not's" and re-enactments, to appreciative laughter. Margie Morgan-Davie, Patrick DiGiovanni, and Kai McGiver had led them.

2016-07-66. The seventh, eighth and ninth graders sat in a long row as their adults, Lily Bergstein, Oliver Bacon, and Bryant Henning, stayed out of the picture. Their co-clerks Analea Blackburn and Abby Burtiss, recited the many Quakerly and joyful activities they had enjoyed at Silver Bay. Groups of the young people pantomimed each one with their bodies—and with a bit of tongue-in-cheek. The finale was a sweet a capella rendition of "River."

2016-07-67. The tenth, eleventh and twelfth graders took the stage as the rising seniors' names were read by Zachary Clausen and Jackson Menoher. A rap of "Week at Silver Bay," with beat-box accompaniment, delivered their epistle to hoots of approval.

2016-07-68. Jillian Smith (Saratoga), for our Epistle Committee, followed the Junior Yearly Meeting epistles by reading the Epistle of our yearly meeting, which we had approved this afternoon.

2016-07-69. Melanie-Claire Mallison (Ithaca), as clerk of the Sessions Committee, introduced the Pay As Led proposal for our information, and invited responses and questions from the floor as to this way of handling fees for attending future Summer Sessions. The report is [attached](#).

2016-07-70. Melanie-Claire also introduced the possibility of alternate sites for our future Summer Sessions. She said initial explorations have yielded a few realistically possible campuses in New York State—notably, Niagara University, the site of the 2017 Gathering of Friends General Conference. She urged us to attend the Gathering, which NYYM is co-hosting with Canadian Yearly Meeting, and otherwise to consider this possibility. The report is [attached](#).

2016-07-71. The minutes of this session were read, corrected and approved.

2016-07-72. The clerk acknowledged the occasion, for the first time in these Summer Sessions, of ample time remaining after the business of our session was completed. She called on us to plunge into a substantial period of worship to conclude our meeting and our week.

2016-07-73. Then adjourned, at approximately 8:15 p.m., to meet again for the Fall Sessions of the yearly meeting to be held at Scarsdale and White Plains, N.Y., November 11-13, 2016.

