

2017
ADVANCE REPORTS

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



**Prepared for Summer Sessions
July 23–29, 2017, Silver Bay, NY**

Please use the documents of this book throughout the week in preparation for business sessions, committee meetings, and the special meetings being held this year.

THIS COPY BELONGS TO

NEW YORK YEARLY MEETING ADVANCE REPORTS

The documents of this publication were printed in advance of the 2017–2018 *Yearbook* for consideration at sessions of New York Yearly Meeting in July of 2017.

Please note that the budgets and expenditures of many committees may be found in the Treasurer’s Accounts, page 81. Committees that have their own financial clerks submitted financial reports as part of their committee’s Advance Report. All financial reports are for the 2016 calendar year.

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NEW YORK YEARLY MEETING
FALL SESSIONS
November 11–13, 2016

Ethical Culture Society, White Plains, New York
Saturday morning, November 12, 2016

Lucinda Antrim (Scarsdale), Clerk
Jeffrey Aaron (New Brunswick), Assistant Clerk
Karen Way (New Brunswick), Recording Clerk
Robin Mallison Alpern (Amawalk), Reading Clerk

2016-11-01. The meeting opened with silent worship.

2016-11-02. The clerk welcomed Friends, introduced the clerks' table, and thanked those holding the meeting in the Light. She announced that a group journal is available for recording experiences during the weekend. We then entered into worship to hear a message from Christopher Sammond (Poplar Ridge) on the impact of our nation's political situation.

2016-11-03. Christopher Sammond, general secretary, spoke of the communion of Friends seeking to live out our lives in accordance with God's will, whether Republican, Democrat, or any other political affiliation. With that in mind, Christopher addressed the trauma experienced by many Friends with the election of Donald Trump. Christopher named many fears: irreversible climate change, racism, religious persecution, gender discrimination, and others. But Christopher turned to what he realized he can trust—God's presence and availability, the power of love and compassion to overcome fear, hatred, and bigotry and the power of non-violence and the willingness to suffer to soften people's hearts. Christopher referenced a famous quote, reminding us that the arc of the universe does indeed bend toward justice. In facing the challenges ahead, we are called to endure a "baptism of fire" that will shake us and temper us. Christopher affirmed that we have the resources to face this time, and ended with a query: "In what do you trust?"

Friends divided into small groups to discuss this query and the issues that prompted it. The discussion time concluded with a song led by Jeffrey Aaron, "A Song of Peace."

Christopher's complete message will be attached to these minutes (see page 11).

2016-11-04. The reading clerk read the roll of monthly meetings and worship groups. Friends stood in response.

2016-11-05. Jeffrey Aaron (New Brunswick), co-clerk of the Meetings for Discernment Steering Committee, described the value of extended worship for Friends in the past and the present. Comments from those attending the Meetings for Discernment at Summer Sessions spoke of deeper experience and growing community. The committee is working on issues of scheduling and on the nature of the queries that are offered at the beginning of a Meeting for Discernment. Friends were reminded that regions and local meetings can volunteer as hosts for future Meetings for Discernment. The winter Meeting for Discernment will be held at Poplar Ridge Meetinghouse on March 4, 2017. *[Editor's note: this date was subsequently changed to March 11, with snow date of March 18, 2017.]* Friends received the report.

2016-11-06. Dennis Haag (Old Chatham) reported for himself and Regina Haag on their first 120 days as co-executive directors of Powell House. Dennis described the challenges and delights of learning a new job in such a busy place and of becoming "custodians of tradition and stewards of memory." Dennis listed what is needed next in maintaining and developing Powell House, growing use and connectivity with NYYM. Dennis expressed his hope that Powell House will be instrumental in growing and enriching the yearly meeting. In turn, the goodwill and support of the yearly meeting makes all this growth possible. Friends received the report.

2016-11-07. John Cooley (Central Finger Lakes) clerk of General Services Coordinating Committee, opened the presentation of the proposed budget for 2017 (attached, see page 76), offering it for approval even though it has yet to be formally approved by the Coordinating Committee. John introduced Matt Scanlon (Scarsdale), clerk of Financial Services. Matt noted that expenses for ARCH (Aging Resources, Consultation, and Help) have been shown in a separate column and then combined in the final

column. Matt also noted that the uncounted contributions from hundreds of volunteers make the yearly meeting budget different from that of a business, in that decreasing expenses can lead to a cycle of decreasing monetary contributions.

Matt presented the expense lines in detail, taking questions from the body. The projected expense total for 2017 is \$621,120, an increase of \$34,397 over last year. Increases come from the salary for the new field secretary for children and youth, various office expenses, and changes in sources of funds for Powell House and Oakwood School. Matt then presented the revenue side in detail. Increased revenue will come from reserves from 2016, grant income, redistribution of trust fund earnings, covenant donations, and individual donations. Meetings varied in their response to the 2017 request for covenant donations: of 57 meetings responding, 32 increased their donation over 2016, 12 kept their donation, and 13 decreased their donation.

2016-11-08. Friends approved the Budget for 2017.

2016-11-09. Friends separately approved having Financial Services further investigate combining NYYM managed funds.

2016-11-10. Friends also approved transferring the excess revenue over expenses in 2016 into the revenue of 2017.

2016-11-11. Friends received the Financial Services report.

2016-11-12. Paula McClure (Montclair), treasurer of NYYM, presented and explained the draft of the Treasurer's Report as of October 31, 2016 (attached, page 81). Friends received the report.

2016-11-13. Mary Eagleson (Scarsdale) welcomed us for the Host Task Group. She reported that 124 adults and 13 youth registered for Fall Sessions; 115 adults and 12 youth attended. Mary thanked members from Purchase and other meetings who helped make this gathering possible. Friends received the report.

2016-11-14. The reading clerk read a Travel Minute from Fifteenth Street Meeting for Emily Provance. The minute describes how Emily is called by God to the ministry of build-

ing connections with and between people. She is exploring how Quaker practices from the past can help Quakers now, and how all people called to ministry can grow into their roles. Friends approved having the clerk endorse the Travel Minute.

2016-11-15. Gabrielle Savory Bailey, young adult field secretary, thanked Friends for their support during her recovery from a heart attack. Gabi described how she has been sharing her workload with Emily Provance, an arrangement that will continue until Gabi is recovered.

2016-11-16. The minutes of this session were heard, corrected, and approved in stages.

2016-11-17. Meeting closed with worship and announcements.

Ethical Culture Society, White Plains, New York
Saturday afternoon, November 12, 2016

Lucinda Antrim (Scarsdale), Clerk
Jeffrey Aaron (New Brunswick), Assistant Clerk
Melanie-Claire Mallison (Ithaca), Recording Clerk
Rima Segal (Rochester), Reading Clerk

2016-11-18. Friends gathered in worship.

2016-11-19. The clerk introduced those at the clerks' table. She noted changes to the agenda, including a setting aside of the consent agenda to Sunday morning.

2016-11-20. Peter Phillips (Cornwall), clerk of the Committee to Revise *Faith and Practice*, brought for second reading a new section for our *Faith and Practice*—"Use of Technology in the Conduct of Business"—first read at the 2016 Spring Sessions (NYYM minute 2016-04-07). Friends approved this new section as attached (item A; see page 14).

Peter read "Covenant Relationships" previously presented for a first reading at the 2015 NYYM Summer Sessions (2015-07-26). This section includes new inserted text and significant deleted text. Friends approved these changes, per the attached (item B; see page 15). Out of the worship, Friends spoke to the joy and timeliness of the approval of this inclusive and non-judg-

mental expression of our faith.

2016-11-21. Jillian Smith (Saratoga Meeting, attending Brooklyn and Powell House) reported on the Quaker Party held in June 2016 in New York City, reading their epistle (attached, see page 16). She explained how the epistle was created using crayons and hashtags. Friends received the report and epistle, speaking to the remarkable space created at “Quite possibly the first ever Quaker Party...”

Jillian noted that the large group and the energy of the young adult Friends who attended the Quaker Party are not present here at our Fall Sessions. She asked that we hold this disconnect in the Light.

2016-11-22. Melinda Wenner Bradley (Philadelphia Yearly Meeting), NYYM field secretary for children and youth, began her report with this poem;

For the Children....

by Gary Snyder

The rising hills, the slopes,
of statistics
lie before us,
the steep climb
of everything, going up,
up, as we all
go down.

In the next century
or the one beyond that,
they say,
are valleys, pastures,
we can meet there in peace
if we make it.

To climb these coming crests
one word to you, to
you and your children:
stay together
learn the flowers
go light.

Melinda spoke about the four highlighted items in her report (attached, see page 18). First, the Monthly Meeting Partner

Project will begin its work with Montclair and Wilton Friends Meetings. Melinda thanked all the meetings that applied and are welcome to apply again over the three years of this project. She spoke specifically to the thoughtful and Light-filled overlap in this work with youth, young adults, and adults.

Second, she is working on support for local meetings and worship group communities. She especially invites us to the first “Parent Meetup” being held on Saturday, December 3, 2016, at Fifteenth Street Meeting. She encourages us to take a poster home to our Meeting and attend.

Third, Melinda is grateful for the collaborative work with NYYM staff, the Powell House youth directors, and for her work with other yearly meetings and committees. She noted the dates for two upcoming Youth Institutes.

Fourth, she took part in the planning of the Youth Program for these Fall Sessions and is grateful to the yearly meeting for providing this opportunity to create a gathering for our young Friends.

2016-11-23. Christopher Sammond introduced our interim communications director, Sarah Way (Brooklyn). Sarah spoke of her enjoyment working with the yearly meeting on our social and print communications.

2016-11-24. The minutes were read, corrected, and approved in stages throughout this meeting.

2016-11-25. Friends settled into open worship to meet together again as a body on Sunday morning.

Scarsdale Friends Meeting, Scarsdale, New York
Sunday morning, November 13, 2016

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

2016-11-26. Friends gathered in a time of open worship.

2016-11-27. The clerk welcomed Friends, noting that the only

place for us to lay our heads is in God. She shared her long journey to becoming clerk and her gratitude to Friends for their help along the way.

2016-11-28. The clerk introduced the clerk’s table.

2016-11-29. The consent agenda was held over from yesterday’s agenda. Friends approved the consent agenda, below.

CONSENT AGENDA

Nominating Report for Fall Sessions 2016

General Services Coordinating Committee

Development Committee Class of 2017

Radames (Ray) Rios ('15) co-opted Catskill (attender)

Class of 2019

Jerry Leaphart ('16) Wilton

Personnel Class of 2019

David Garrity Fifteenth Street

Nurture Coordinating Committee

NCC Members at large

CORRECTION to CLASS: Class of 2019 (not 2017)

Jennifer Perry Rochester

Witness Coordinating Committee

Alternatives to Violence Project, Inc. Committee Class of 2019

Karen Reixach Ithaca

Susan Wolf Ithaca

Prisons Committee Class of 2019

Karen Hall Poughkeepsie

RELEASE FROM SERVICE

Melinda Wenner Bradley from Youth Committee

Arlene Johnson from Conflict Transformation

Joseph Kulin from Indian Affairs Committee

Rebecca Wolf from Indian Affairs Committee

2016-11-30. Deb Wood (Purchase) reported for Nominating Committee. Isabella Aguirre (Purchase) is nominated to the Young Adult Concerns Committee, class of 2017. Friends approved.

2016-11-31. Fred Dettmer (Purchase), reporting for the Trustees, requested authorization of the body to dispose of the Plattekill Meeting House and Property and the Town of Morris Cemetery and Associated Fund. The Trustees' full report is attached (see page 21). The authorization required two approvals:

Resolved that the Trustees of New York Yearly Meeting are authorized and directed to dispose of the property and building known as Plattekill Meeting House, and the contents of said Meeting House, and to place any monies derived therefrom in funds under management by Trustees.

Friends approved.

Resolved that the Trustees of New York Yearly Meeting are authorized and directed to dispose of the cemetery located in the Town of Morris, Otsego County, New York, and the cemetery maintenance fund associated therewith, for no fee or other charges except expenses incurred in connection with the transfer of the cemetery and fund, to the Town of Morris for the continued maintenance of the cemetery by the Town.

Friends approved.

2016-11-32. Deb Wood (Purchase) reported on responses from monthly meetings to Brooklyn Monthly Meeting's minute on Friends United Meeting (attached, see page 23). Friends received the report.

2016-11-33. Deb presented a minute of exercise from Nurture Coordinating Committee (attached, see page 26), summarizing their sense of places where we have unity and where we do not have unity regarding Brooklyn Monthly Meeting's minute. The minute of exercise was sent back to Nurture Coordinating Committee for additional seasoning, specifically to make sure that the following statement reflects unity, since at least one Friend heard that some meetings did hope that their withholding of funds would exert leverage: "Any current withholding of funds to FUM by meetings and individual Friends is a matter of conscience and integrity. We reject the practice of withholding funds for the purpose of trying to exert leverage in this process." NCC was asked to report back at Spring Sessions 2017.

2016-11-34. Mary Eagleson (Scarsdale) reported for the Indian Affairs Committee. She presented a proposed minute support-

ing the Standing Rock Sioux. Friends approved the minute and its broad distribution (attached, see page 28).

2016-11-35. The Indian Affairs Committee asked the clerk and general secretary to resend the letter originally approved in NYYM Minute 2014-11-11 to the US president requesting a pardon for Leonard Peltier. The letter will also be sent to Leonard Peltier. Friends approved.

2016-11-36. The Indian Affairs Committee will make information available about the needs of the Standing Rock Sioux.

2016-11-37. Peter Phillips (Cornwall) presented a first reading for a change to the section on Spiritual Care of Members in *Faith and Practice* (attached, see page 31). Friends are asked to express any concerns to the *Faith and Practice* Committee.

2016-11-38. Irma Guthrie (Perry City), clerk of Ministry Coordinating Committee, brought a request that the body direct the clerk and general secretary to write a letter to president-elect Trump encouraging him to publicly repudiate hateful messages and actions that arose during and since his campaign. Friends approved.

2016-11-39. John Cooley (Central Finger Lakes), clerk of General Services Coordinating Committee, reported the GSCC approved their part of the review for the ARCH grant from the Friends Foundation for Aging and also their grant proposal for a business/development grant from FFA. GSCC also approved administrative support of a grant application by Emily Provance to a program at Duke Divinity School. John reported that the Audit Committee has recommended that we compose a management representation letter to complete our 2014 audit process and that the clerk of GSCC and the clerk of the Trustees will sign that letter.

John reported that GSCC considered the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Staff Structure. GSCC approved three items: 1) creation of a committee to recruit a new general secretary, 2) creation of a job description for a general secretary for consideration at Coordinating Committee weekend in January, and 3) a publicized announcement of an opening.

2016-11-40. Barbara Menzel (New Brunswick) presented the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Staff Structure (attached, see page 32). She noted that many changes have taken place in the yearly meeting since Christopher Sammond joined us 12 years ago. For example, there is more staff, covering the life cycle of Friends, from cradle to grave. Friends received the report. The committee was encouraged to seek out a Friend of color to join the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on Staff Structure.

2016-11-41. Claire Simon (Montclair) reported as the Spring and Fall Sessions liaison for Sessions Committee. Spring Sessions 2017 will be at Friends Academy in Locust Valley and hosted by Long Island Quarter. Fall Sessions 2017 will be hosted by All Friends Quarter at Caldwell University in New Jersey, with Sunday meeting at Chatham-Summit meetinghouse. Claire expressed appreciation to the hosts for this Fall Sessions. Friends received the report.

2016-11-42. Friends asked Sessions Committee to consider moving the date of Fall Sessions so that it does not conflict with the FCNL annual meeting. Friends approved.

2016-11-43. The minutes were read, corrected, and approved in stages throughout this meeting.

2016-11-44. Friends closed with a period of waiting worship.

ATTACHMENTS

Message—General Secretary, Christopher Sammond, Fall Sessions 2016

See minute 2016-11-03, p. 1

Good Morning,

I had not planned on speaking this weekend, having originally found no leading to do so. After the election, I gradually felt a leading to speak growing in me. Lucinda and I felt that we could not just enter into our business without acknowledging the impact of this election on many of us. This message is in response to that concern.

I want to preface these remarks with the recognition that I know that some members of our yearly meeting are Republicans, and that they anticipated voting for Mr. Trump. I respect their decision based on their best judgement and sense of leading. And I know that they often feel in a distinct minority in our fellowship, even beleaguered, and I want to say that we as Friends are not Republican nor Democrat, conservative nor liberal, that we are a fellowship of people drawn to a practice of listening for God's voice and leading, and seeking to live out our lives in accordance with the will of the Divine as best we can discern. I believe we would be a healthier Religious Society if we had more people in our ranks who differed from what can often be an assumed liberal norm.

That said, I have spoken with many Friends who are deeply, overwhelmingly traumatized by the election of Mr. Trump. One Friend told me when it happened she was so distraught she repeatedly threw up. Another reported waking up screaming in terror at the prospect of a Trump presidency. I myself have had many a night with disrupted sleep over the past six months at that prospect, chilled with an overwhelming fear of what that might mean.

Some here are not traumatized. Some I have spoken with are concerned, yes. Disappointed, yes. But by no means bearing the trauma I witness in others. We need to be able to be present to each other in all the different ways we are responding to the election.

Some see the Trump presidency as being disastrous for abetting the growing impact of climate change. Bill McKibbin, founder of 350.org, wrote that this election is “game over” for averting the catastrophic impact of global warming, meaning literally the eventual end of life on Earth as we know it. Some see a Trump presidency as a legitimization of the racism which has permeated our society, now more visible, and now both tacitly and overtly acceptable. In the night after Election Day, racial epithets and swastikas were spray painted in public places across this country. Some see a Trump presidency as putting the world at grave risk, with someone whose emotional maturity and psychological balance they question now in charge of the largest military on earth, and the codes to deploy our nuclear weapons. For some of us, the horror of having a racist, bigot, misogynist, and xenophobe in the White House is more than we can bear. Some see a Trump presidency as threatening our civil and human rights, as his campaign promises included resuming the practice of torture, limiting the rights of Muslims, and supporting an aggressive police response to those protesting the reality of racism in this country. Some see a Trump presidency as threatening to fill the Supreme Court with justices so far to the right as to tip the balance in this country on a variety of issues for a generation, or more.

I, personally, hold all these fears, and more. And in the moments when I could find centered connection in the midst of the terror I felt leading up to and after the election, what I heard in that place where I know the voice of the Divine to speak in me, was “Will you trust me?” Over and over I heard, “Will you trust me?”

Now, I don’t interpret this to mean everything is going to be just fine. But I do hear it as both a query and a request. And I will tell you what I know I can trust:

I trust in God’s presence, and availability.

I trust in my ability, when I am centered and grounded that I will be led.

I trust in the power of love and compassion to overcome fear, hatred, and bigotry.

I trust that when I am aligned with God, that my meager resources of abilities and gifts are multiplied many times.

I trust in the power of non-violence, love, and the willingness to suffer to soften people's hearts, and thereby overcome structures of domination, injustice and intimidation.

I trust that the arc of the Universe does indeed bend toward justice.

Speaking with a friend about what I trusted, she told me the story of a woman in a village near Bophal, when the chemical plant blew up. Everyone in the village was running away, screaming in panic. She, having had a long practice of meditation, listened inwardly for what to do. What she heard was "turn on the fan, lie down on the floor, and go to sleep." She did that, and she was the only one in her village that survived. All those running away were breathing in the poison in great gulps, while her metabolism slowed down, in sleep.

On a lesser note, the Friday before the election, I had had an intimation of which way it was going, and I was utterly undone, so upset and grieved that I couldn't really function. I could hardly manage to pack to go to the workshop on Beyond the White Privilege Conference. I was already running late. But I kept getting a pull to go out to the garden and weed. I finally heeded it, and after about 45 minutes with my hands in the rich soil, I felt grounded and together enough that I could function.

This is what we do. This is what we do as Friends. We listen, and are guided. We act.

Night before last, as I held the question of what to say today, the words "baptism of fire" came to me. I believe we are at the dawn of a moment in history that will shake us as a nation to our very foundations. We will be called to new depths in our practice. We will be challenged in ways I can only imagine. We will be tempered. It will not be easy. And we have the resources to face this time. So I ask you, in what do you trust?

Use of Technology in the Conduct of Business
Changes to *Faith and Practice*
Approved Fall Sessions 2016

See minute 2016-11-20-A, p. 4

To be inserted on p. 90 as the last paragraph in the section “General Business Procedures” that begins on p. 87.

The use of digital communication systems in the conduct of Friends’ business has great benefits and has also created challenges for Quaker business process. The use of technologies such as video conferencing and electronic mail makes it possible to reduce the need for travel, and thereby expands participation by distant Friends. Our business can be responsive to the fast pace of developments in the world. Many Friends expect to use these technologies as they engage in the life of the Society. At the same time, we must be mindful that among us are Friends who cannot or choose not to use these technologies freely.

When use of these technologies replaces or augments face-to-face meetings, we must maintain discipline so that corporate worship, spiritual discernment, and the presence of the Spirit in our meetings and assemblies is retained. Each yearly meeting body that uses these technologies should establish agreements and protocols to ensure inclusivity and full participation, protect privacy and confidentiality, maintain collegiality, and support openness to Spirit.

Committees and other yearly meeting bodies seeking to conduct business by ways other than physical meetings should do so only upon formal approval at a face-to-face meeting. While they may choose to use e-mail or other asynchronous digital communication for scheduling meetings or distributing documents, they are advised not to use it to share ministry, respond to proposals, or engage in substantive discussions. These activities are best suited to synchronous communication such as physical meetings or telephone or video conferencing.

Covenant Relationships

Changes to *Faith and Practice*

Approved Fall Sessions 2016

See minute 2016-11-20-B, p. 4

Page 38, starting in the middle of the last paragraph, changes in **bold**.

We joyfully acknowledge the sustaining, enriching presence of loving unions among us, **whether between persons of different or the same sex**, and we want the meeting's strength to undergird these covenants.

[Delete Crowell quotation]

Some of us live alone and find love and community among our friends. Some of us are single parents caring for our children. Some members' families follow traditional patterns; others do not. **Many monthly meetings honor committed gay and lesbian relationships and support or perform same-sex marriages**. Just as there is that of God in every person, there is that of God in every relationship that calls upon God. We seek to treat responsible, loving relationships tenderly and respectfully. We seek to hold each other in the light of our ideal that Spirit-filled covenant relationships are the one sure basis for love and sexuality.

In prayer and worship, each meeting can speak truthfully to the particular needs and difficulties of its members and their relationships. Through committees of clearness, for example, a meeting can respond with great care and concern to requests for marriage that come before it, following the procedures described **elsewhere in this book**.

[Delete rest of paragraph]

Marriage is a covenant intended for life. *[Delete rest of paragraph]*
Families need the support.... [etc.]

Epistle: Quaker Party, June 2016

See minute 2016-11-21, p. 5

Quite possibly the first ever Quaker Party, sixth month, seventeenth and eighteenth days, at 15 Rutherford Place, New York City, in the year called two thousand and sixteen . . .

How does a Quaker Party? Hello, Friend!

This meeting house is huge!

You Are Loved even before You ARRIVE HERE. appreciation for learning. form shared experiences. Joy in community

dancing in a cuddle pile

Quakers create safe space in the city

One vegetarian says to the other vegetarian, “How do we cook the bacon?”

The Quaker Party has started! Friends are here from all over the world! It’s amazing how much joy is waiting if we welcome opportunities to play

Care for humanity

courage to move freely

The appearance of Spirit in unexpected places openness easy intimacy

Quakers are quite loud when they’re not being quiet and sometimes loud even when they are being quiet

“I’m kinda a junkie for the Holy Spirit.”

PLAY might defuse the duty and dread of Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business

There is beautiful singing coming from the plenary in the meetinghouse. Harmonies when we know the song—but great enthusiasm when we don’t

I’m gonna share something I just learned, because when you learn something new, why not share it?

I’m pretty sure the kids are off playing the magnetic cello. Does anyone have any bike tools with them?

What do you do in the world and how does it align or contrast

with your Faith?

“it should be as easy to give money to my Meeting as it is to spend money at the bar with my friends.”

we spoke about how we can have integrity in our actions with money and Quakers and our communities. Earmarked funds from the 1800's are no longer pertinent to the Light or Truth of Friends

we see that there is still racism in the US and we are ready to work! Who wants to work with me?

Friends and Meetings need to do more to disrupt homophobia.

I felt embraced in a way I hadn't expected.

We need to challenge our cliché response of talking about love and kindness.

I've been away from Quakerism for a long time

We need to create safe spaces for people to heal.

I felt called to come back.

No one in our community should be grieving alone, but so many of us are.

Staying up late in the kitchen of Brooklyn Meetinghouse=crucial fellowship at the quaker party

How do we share and manage financial and other resources with each other in the best way?

I'm gonna throw some Quaker on you ...

We need to write queries about sex and not rules perspective can change. NEVER STOP ADVOCATING.

“Quakers can do anything and it'd be a lot of fun”

How do we get out of these challenges to our connection? How do we deal with the pain of negotiations with reality? I feel like I just shed layers of no longer needed weight.

For the first 25ish years of my life the only Quakers I knew were pale skinned folks....here at the Quakerparty the people are from many countries, many states, and many cultures. we are all different individuals.

Let people try worship (even if they aren't ready to be a Quaker) we make our "traditions" and practices new every day and every time we engage. If I don't understand I will learn by being part of the change.

sell your cleverness and buy some wonderment.

#QuakerParty

Children and Youth Field Secretary Report

See minute 2016-11-22, p. 5

In the months since our Summer Sessions, I've been engaged in communication and visitation across the yearly meeting and worked on several different projects related to supporting children and families as well as First Day School and yearly meeting programs.

Monthly Meeting Partner Project:

- Following the October 15 deadline and receipt of several thoughtful applications, members of the NYYM staff and Youth Committee reviewed these applications in a discernment process. The first two partner meetings will be Montclair Meeting and Wilton Meeting.
- In addition to the applications received, there were conversations with seven other meetings who engaged in some level of discernment with the application questions and may apply in years two or three.
- The survey tool for the project, which will also be shared yearly meeting-wide, has been a big task.
- It measures both experiences of life in meeting communities and the demographics of "who we are" as a monthly meeting/worship group/yearly meeting. We're working with Alan Krieger, a consultant, and NEYM counterparts on this jointly developed piece of the project. Gratitude to Melanie-Claire Mallison, for her work on setting up and formatting the survey tool (there were many edits!), and to

Old Chatham Meeting for helping us to test the survey and focus group model with our facilitators.

- In addition to completing the survey, partner meetings will engage in focus group discussions to delve more deeply into their survey responses and helps us to understand what works (and what doesn't) with outreach and welcome, programs and inclusion. We'll listen to the wisdom from our meetings about where they are, as well as for yearnings and hopes as we engage in this work. At the end of each year of the project, we'll do the survey and focus groups again, and see where there has been growth and what we have learned.
- Seven Friends from across the yearly meeting are part of a "facilitation team" for the project, who will lead the focus groups in partner meetings over the next three years. They have received facilitation training from Alan Krieger (consultant) and most of them were able to attend the day spent testing our survey/focus group questions. We are grateful for their service.

Support for Local Meeting and Worship Group Communities:

- I'm developing themes and content for a quarterly e-newsletter cycle for RE/FDS clerks with an emphasis on resources and tools for religious education programs and practitioners and information to share with families in the meeting community. With other staff, I'm considering the creation of a separate list for NYYM families and how this would also be useful for communication about events and programs.
- Visitation: the Monthly Meeting Partner Project includes an expectation that I'll visit twelve meetings in the first year of the program; this is an intersection with my work to support meetings and worship groups. I want to be sure these visits are spread across the nine quarters/regions.
- Since Summer Sessions, I've visited seven monthly meetings in five quarters/regions/half yearly meetings and scheduled two more.

- Programs for meetings: This fall, programs at monthly meetings have focused on building multigenerational spiritual community and introducing Godly Play/Faith & Play stories as a tool in FDS programs. I've also supported meeting FDS/RE committees with planning for their 2016-17 programs.
- At the invitation of a Quaker Life Committee supported by Friends from Westbury Meeting and others, I led a "Quakerism 101" professional development session for faculty at Westbury Friends school and addressed families at Back to School Night about Quaker history, faith, and practice.
- NEW PROGRAM! "Parent Meetups" are an opportunity for spiritual and social fellowship and refreshment with other parents in the YM. First one: Saturday, December 3rd, 3:00-5:30pm at 15th Street Meeting (childcare provided). In addition to this first event, we are planning a series of four more in NYQM in 2017, and I hope to bring events to 3-4 other quarters/regions in 2017 as well. I'm glad to be working on this with Gabi Savory Bailey and Emily Provance.
- Traveling Resource Library: My hope is to come to Fall Sessions with these resources somewhat refreshed. I'm working on a new system to catalog and share what's available.

Staff, Powell House and Committee Collaboration:

- Working with Steven Davison on reorganizing, refreshing, and adding to the YM website pages for children and youth.
- Working with Chris DeRoller and Mike Clark on two 2017 Youth Institutes:
- Farmington-Scipio Regional Meeting will host a Youth Institute on March 4 at Rochester Meeting. The hope is to build a community of practice in FSRM of Friends who are interested in supporting youth and working on planning program for the Spring Gatherings in the region, and together develop clear outlines and expectations for that planning.

- April 21-23, at Powell House—YI 2017 will include workshops from the “REnewal and REsources” program I developed with Beth Collea, my staff counterpart in NEYM. This includes support and resources specifically for Friends working with First Day programs. We’re excited about the pairing of YI and RE+RE, and the places in the weekend where we’ll intersect and share our learnings.
- I had a lovely, generative conversation with a staff person for youth in Britain YM. They are doing similar work to the Partner Project, and we expressed a shared hope for continued communication and learning together.
- Spoke at the NYYM Fall Fundraising dinner about the work of the CYFS and the Partner Project.
- Serving on the “steering circle” of the Outreach Working Group under MCC care.

Yearly Meeting Sessions:

- Helped with children and youth program planning for Fall Sessions; created and distributed flyers for children and teen programs.
- An idea is taking shape, to create a “Fall/Spring Sessions Task Group” model where a core group of Friends provide leadership for planning children/youth programs at these gatherings, working each time with representatives from the host quarter/region. This is a developing idea, but one that seems like it would be helpful for program continuity and success, and support Sessions host committees.

Melinda Wenner Bradley CYSF/NYYM

Trustees report—Trustee minutes on disposal of two properties

See minute 2016-11-31, p. 8

*Minutes from Trustees for New York Yearly Meeting
To Approve Disposal of Plattekill Meeting House and
Property, and Town of Morris Cemetery and Associated Fund*

In 1969, Nine Partners Quarterly Meeting transferred to the Huguenot Historical Society a parcel of land and building known as the Plattekill Meeting House. In 2015, the Huguenot Historical Society advised Nine Partners Quarter that it no longer could maintain the meetinghouse and sought to return it. The Quarter was unwilling to accept title but alerted the yearly meeting of this offer. Trustees of New York Yearly Meeting agreed with the Huguenot Historical Society to accept the Plattekill property and meetinghouse for NYYM. All of the required approvals have been received so the property and building shortly will become the property of NYYM. Trustees intend to expeditiously dispose of valuable or historic contents of the building for continued use, if possible, and the property and building to a purchaser who will preserve the historical nature of the meetinghouse.

Section 203 of the Religious Corporations Law provides that the trustees of any meeting of the Religious Society of Friends may sell, convey and grant any property whenever any meeting of said society by resolution so directs. Accordingly, the Trustees request that NYYM approve the following minute:

Resolved that the Trustees of New York Yearly Meeting are authorized and directed to dispose of the property and building known as Plattekill Meeting House, and the contents of said Meeting House, and to place any monies derived therefrom in funds under management by Trustees.

Trustees also are in the process of negotiating the transfer of the cemetery located in the Town of Morris, Otsego County, New York, and the cemetery maintenance fund associated therewith, to the Town of Morris so that the cemetery will continue to be maintained and cared for in the future. The Trustees currently have about \$34,000 under their care for the cemetery maintenance fund, all of which will be transferred to the Town of Morris, less any costs incurred in the transfer of the cemetery and the fund. Accordingly, the Trustees request that NYYM approve the following minute:

Resolved that the Trustees of New York Yearly Meeting are authorized and directed to dispose of the cemetery located in the Town of Morris, Otsego County, New York, and the cemetery maintenance fund associated therewith, for no fee or other

charges except expenses incurred in connection with the transfer of the cemetery and fund, to the Town of Morris for the continued maintenance of the cemetery by the Town.

Report: Nurture Coordinating Committee on local meeting response to the “Brooklyn Minute” on FUM personnel policy

See minute 2016-11-32, p. 8

Friends may recall that, at Summer Sessions 2015, Nurture Coordinating Committee reported that we had received a minute from Brooklyn Meeting with the following concern, and I will quote the minute:

Brooklyn Monthly Meeting urges that New York Yearly Meeting (“NYYM”) follow the example of Canadian Yearly Meeting and draft a letter to Friends United Meeting (“FUM”) expressing displeasure at its current discrimination against LGBT Quakers in paid and unpaid positions of service or leadership.

The letter further stated that until the time such policies are laid aside and equally embraced for all Quakers, Brooklyn Meeting will only designate its payments to FUM for specific projects, such projects which in the opinion of New York Yearly Meeting are worthy enough to exceed the damage to equality and human dignity done by FUM’s discriminatory personnel policies.

At such time that New York Yearly Meeting undertakes such designation of its payments to FUM, Brooklyn Monthly Meeting will cease its present withholding of a portion of its Covenant Donation to NYYM in protest of FUM’s discriminatory personnel policies.

Following the 2015 Summer Sessions, NCC asked the YM office to send out to all monthly meetings a memo that included the Brooklyn Minute, the NYQM endorsement, the wording of the FUM personnel policy in question, the historical connection between NYYM and FUM and some of the NCC minutes of our discernment. A few responses were received.

NCC considered this again during Coordinating Weekend at the end of January. It became clear that not enough background information had been given with the first letter, so a follow-up

letter was sent with more information about FUM's deliberations, and several documents were added to the FUM area of the YM website. It was sent a month or so before Spring Sessions.

To date, NCC has received responses from 12 monthly meetings. The following meetings forwarded a minute that spoke about both their reactions to the Brooklyn minute and their recommendation for how NYYM could best work toward changing FUM's personnel policy: Bulls Head Oswego, Ithaca, Flushing, Cornwall, Old Chatham, Manasquan, and Collins. Flushing reduced their 2016 covenant donation by the percentage they felt would be sent to FUM. Bulls Head, Ithaca and Manasquan encouraged NYYM representatives to FUM to pursue their efforts of "continued and purposeful dialog" with FUM. Collins believes that "the best method of expressing our concern is in the way of John Woolman, in a spirit of humility, love and prayer for our fellow Friends." Bulls Head pointed out that NYYM does not have its own sexual ethic. Bulls Head is not clear to withhold funds from FUM, and continues in discernment. Ithaca, Cornwall and Manasquan expressed their appreciation to Brooklyn for highlighting this concern, but did not unite with NYYM's withholding financial support to FUM. New Brunswick and 15th Street Meetings have spent several months in discernment, but NCC hasn't yet received a minute from those meetings. Hudson Meeting has found this a divisive issue, and has lost one member because of it. Poughkeepsie sent a report of comments made during a meeting considering the Brooklyn minute. Poplar Ridge sent a minute from 2005, when NYYM did a great deal of discernment around this concern.

Manasquan Meeting: "Manasquan Meeting is troubled by the personnel policy of FUM. We find it to be contrary to Friends' testimony as to that of God in every person. Our commitment to the Quaker values of integrity and equality leads us to encourage continued and prayerful dialogue between New York Yearly Meeting and FUM. We support New York Yearly Meeting's efforts as you continue to struggle with this issue, and we hold you in the Light."

From Ithaca Monthly Meeting: "Ithaca Monthly Meeting appreciates Brooklyn Meeting for highlighting this important issue. IMM supports LGBTQ F(f)riends; LGBTQ members are

an integral part of our meeting and we marry couples under the meeting's care. Despite FUM's having a personnel policy we believe to be hurtful and discriminatory, we also value our relationship with and the work of FUM. Therefore, Friends did not feel called to unite with Brooklyn Monthly Meeting's Minute."

The Old Chatham Meeting "remains deeply troubled by the issues of discrimination represented by the personnel policies of Friends United Meeting..." Old Chatham discontinued financial support of FUM nearly a decade ago. They are deeply troubled "that our financial covenant with NYYM includes allocations for FUM, and feel this underwriting of discrimination must end." Old Chatham will withhold 1% of its covenant donation, and will redirect that as a contribution to Ramallah Friends School. Some Old Chatham Friends, as a matter of conscience, do not wish to support any FUM programs, so a corresponding amount will be withheld from their contribution to Ramallah Friends School. Old Chatham encourages NYYM Nominating Committee to seek qualified self-identified LGBTQ Friends to serve on the FUM Board. They also request that "NYYM continue to labor with the discriminatory issues which so trouble us, and to consider whether continued financial support of and membership in FUM is in keeping with NYYM testimonies and the Light given us." Quite recently, Old Chatham send the final payment of their covenant donation for 2016 to the yearly meeting office, with a cover letter explaining that they were withholding 1% of that amount as they had previously stated that they would.

From Cornwall Monthly Meeting: "Cornwall Monthly Meeting is not in unity with respect to the mission and operations of Friends United Meeting. However, it is profoundly disturbed by the discriminatory hiring practices of FUM. It encourages New York Yearly Meeting to engage in FUM's transition to grow into an organization that more closely conducts itself consistently with Quaker testimonies of equality, particularly through our continued representation on FUM's Board."

From Flushing Monthly Meeting: "Flushing Monthly Meeting is withholding \$114 of our covenant donation as a statement of conscience against FUM's discriminatory hiring practices. We further encourage New York Yearly Meeting to follow Canadian

Yearly Meeting’s practice of designating its payments to FUM for specific projects determined worthy enough to exceed the damage of equality and human dignity done by FUM’s discriminatory personnel practices.”

It was reported to NCC at Summer Sessions that Rochester Monthly Meeting has a line in their budget for benevolence *in escrow* for FUM, and have sent a good portion of that earmarked for Ramallah Friends School.

Currently, NYYM contributes \$2,500 to FUM for general support. Another \$2,500 is allocated to the World Ministries Committee for support of FUM projects. These amounts are included in the 2017 NYYM proposed budget.

To date, NCC doesn’t feel that we have heard from enough monthly meetings for NYYM to recommend any change in our policy toward FUM. NCC would like to hear the discernment from other monthly meetings. We appreciate the spirit-led work that our representatives to the FUM General Board do on our behalf, and we recommend that they continue the dialogue.

November 5, 2016

ADDENDUM: New Brunswick Meeting sent their minute on response to the Brooklyn minute. They stand in solidarity with LGBTQ Friends, and support amending or eliminating the current personnel policy. They ask NYYM representatives to the FUM Board to “advance the conversation to amending or deleting that policy.” In addition, they ask that NYYM continue to make its budgeted contributions to FUM.

Minute of Exercise—Nurture Coordinating Committee regarding the “Brooklyn Minute” on FUM personnel policy

See minute 2016-11-33, p.8

For over a year, NYYM is laboring with concerns being raised about the integrity of our supporting Friends United Meeting, given the discriminatory nature of the sexual ethics portion of the organization’s personnel policy. During the past year, the Nurture Coordinating Committee has twice asked monthly

meetings from across the yearly meeting to weigh in on this issue. Only a small fraction have responded. From these responses, and times of discussion and discernment by NCC, we can name places where we sense unity, and places where we as yet do not have unity.

Places where we have unity:

- We joyfully affirm that each and every person is equally loved and cherished by the Divine, equally worthy of love, respect, and equal treatment, and that the gifts which God bestows upon a community are equally distributed to all for the benefit of the community regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, race, class, or any other distinction.
- We find the Friends United Meeting sexual ethics portion of its personnel policy to be at variance with that knowledge and experience, and therefore discriminatory and unjust.
- We hope for, and advocate for, its revision.
- We are deeply pained to be in the position of financially supporting an organization engaging in injustice and discrimination.
- We seek actions which might be effective in changing this situation.
- Any current withholding of funds to FUM by meetings and individual Friends is a matter of conscience and integrity. We reject the practice of withholding funds for the purpose of trying to exert leverage in this process.
- We recognize and value the good works that FUM is doing throughout the world.

Places where we do not yet have unity:

- We are not clear as a yearly meeting to disaffiliate from the other yearly meetings that comprise FUM.
- We are not clear as a yearly meeting to withhold financial contributions from FUM as either a matter of conscience, or in protest.
- Some NYYM Friends are aware that the FUM General Board does not have unity on this portion of the personnel

policy, either unity to retain it, or to revise or eliminate it. Some do not.

- Some of our meetings see the benefit of withholding funds from the general fund of FUM, while others do not.
- Some of our meetings, as a matter of conscience, are withholding from their covenant donation an amount they deem equivalent to what would go to the FUM general fund. Some are choosing not to.
- Some of our meetings would support a more aggressive advocacy on this issue by NYYM's representatives to the FUM General Board, while others support the more quiet diplomacy and ministry of presence which has characterized the stance of board members over the past nine years.

October 22, 2016

Minute in Support of the Standing Rock Sioux protest against the Dakota Access Pipeline

See minute 2016-11-34, p. 8

New York Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) supports the Standing Rock Sioux in their actions opposing construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline. This 1100-mile pipeline would create the same dangers as other projects, such as the XL Keystone Pipeline, and should be rejected for the same reasons. The proposal should properly have been subjected to the same thorough review prior to approval as the XL Pipeline, so that the Standing Rock Sioux could have their voices heard and their historic rights respected, including the right of access to clean water, the foundation of all life, and the protection of their burial sites and other sacred sites as the 1978 Native American Religious Freedom Act guarantees. This includes honoring and respecting the promises of the United States to the Great Sioux Nation in the 1851, 1859 and 1868 Treaties of Fort Laramie which this project would violate.

All the others affected by the project are also entitled to be heard. Anything less, particularly for a project of this scope, is a

failure of the democratic process and is a lack of transparency. It is a deliberate avoidance of the environmental review process and undermines the laws intended to ensure that all environmental effects are considered and properly weighed before approving an undertaking of this magnitude.

As Friends, we bear witness to the equality and to the sacred nature of every person, since every person carries the same Spark of Divine Light. The principle of equality is also a fundamental principle of a democratic society. When we shut out voices and ignore the rights of the people of Native Nations within the US, we deny that principle.

Friends also have had a particular concern for the relations between the European settlers on this continent and its First Nations, beginning with our founder George Fox's encounters with Native inhabitants during his North American travels in the 1680s and the founding of Pennsylvania. New York Yearly Meeting has had a standing Indian Affairs Committee since the 1790s and maintains warm relations with Native Nations and Peoples of this region up to this day. Thus we stand beside our First Nation brothers and sisters in insisting that the legal and treaty rights of the Standing Rock Sioux must be honored and must not be violated by the construction of this pipeline. Too often, Native Nations have paid the price for projects intended to benefit American society by actions that violate treaties and Native rights, such as taking land or constructing dams.

As Friends, we also hold sacred our responsibility, the responsibility of all humanity, to care for the Earth, our home, and preserve it for the future generations of humans and of all life. Our Native sisters and brothers have long led the way in showing the importance of taking into consideration not only our own desires, but also the needs of the future generations, before we act. Projects such as the Dakota Access Pipeline imperil the waters of the earth, vital to the Standing Rock Sioux and to all life. Pursuing the use of fossil fuel rather than finding renewable and sustainable alternatives imperils the atmosphere, the air we breathe and the climate necessary for the continued existence of humanity and of the many forms of life that we know and claim to cherish. We must move quickly to implement environmentally sound practices to preserve our Earth-home and all life on it.

Send to:

- Standing Rock Sioux Tribe*
 - US President
 - NY Senate and Congressional Representatives
 - US Army Corps of Engineers
 - Other meetings and NYYM clerk
 - NY & NJ Councils of Churches
 - Governors of the states of North Dakota, New Jersey, Connecticut
 - Association of Religious Communities (Connecticut)
-

* The Standing Rock Sioux Tribe has received notice from 87 Tribal Nations who have officially taken action to support our opposition to the Dakota Access Pipeline. We are aware that there are more tribes who may have taken action who we are not aware of yet, and also tribes who have indicated that they will do so. To get your tribe's Letter of Support or Resolution to SRST, please email an electronic copy to publicrelations@standingrock.org. Mail copies to contact info below. In one week we have garnered support from nearly 1/6th of the tribal nations in the US. We will continue to update this list as we move forward and hope that more tribes and organizations join our efforts. We welcome non-indigenous support as well. Standing Rock cannot express the gratitude we have for the overwhelming support from both Indigenous and Non-Indigenous peoples here in the United States and globally. We are forever grateful.

Steve Sitting Bear

Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, External Affairs Director

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***Faith and Practice*—change to the section on Spiritual Care of Members, First Reading**

See minute 2016-11-37, p. 9

This replaces the section on p. 122. Note also the language addressing related topics at p. 118.

SPIRITUAL CARE OF MEMBERS. Seeking divine guidance in their discernment, members of ministry and counsel should seek to:

- foster the spiritual growth of the meeting membership and enhance their religious life and fellowship, including especially the nurture and strengthening of corporate worship of the meeting;
- consider individual needs for guidance and to make provision for personal counsel and assistance in matters of interpersonal relationships among members;
- assist individuals and families confronting problems pertaining to illness, financial matters, marital relations, and decisions of conscience, keeping in mind at all times the limits of ministry and counsel's expertise;
- review annually the spiritual condition of the meeting and its membership and to write the State of the Meeting reports;
- develop programs and conferences, study groups, and public meetings to disseminate information regarding Friends' spiritual concerns and to assist members and attenders to deepen the life of the spirit;
- where desired by local meetings, consider qualifications and make recommendations concerning recording gifts in ministry or engagement of pastors or meeting secretaries;
- foster a meeting culture that encourages the emergence of gifts, and provides oversight for individual gifts in ministry.

NOTE: A reading of parts of this section was offered in Spring Sessions 2015 (see yellow *Yearbook* at p. 28). The final “bullet point” has been modified to emphasize support for individual gifts of ministry. The Committee to Revise Faith & Practice seeks the Coordinating Committee's guidance on whether presentation to the body at Fall Sessions 2016 would constitute a first or second reading.

Report from the Ad Hoc Committee on Staff Structure

See minute 2016-11-40, p. 10

Background:

The ad hoc committee on staff structure was created by the General Services Coordinating Committee in response to the resignation of our general secretary announced for summer of 2017. The committee is charged with looking at the current staff structure and making recommendations as to possible changes. The recommendations will inform our search for a new general secretary. Members of the committee are: John Cooley, Lisa Gasstrom, Deb Wood, and Mike Clark, with Karen Way and Barbara Menzel serving as co-clerks. (Karen Way can be reached at kway.psych@gmail.com; Barbara can be reached at bjmenzel@optonline.net.)

Our Process:

The committee created a set of questions to guide our interviews with Friends involved in the work of NYYM. These questions were used to structure interviews with over 30 people—including all YM staff, YM clerks present and past, CC clerks, and so on. At a recent committee meeting we shared the interviews and looked for both common themes and novel approaches to the work of the yearly meeting.

Role of the General Secretary:

During the tenure of our current general secretary, the yearly meeting staff has expanded. We now have part-time field secretaries for young adults and for children and youth, as well as a full time director of our senior resource program (ARCH). We feel that with the broadening of staff we should be able to strengthen our outreach and ministry to monthly meetings.

It is clear from our interviews that Friends feel the need for a person who can offer both spiritual leading and management oversight. The following recommendations emerged during the interview process.

- The general secretary should be a facilitator who engages staff and volunteers in the work of the yearly meeting.
- He/she should live within commuting distance of the

NYYM office and should be a presence in the office at least three days a month. On those days, it might be useful to gather all staff into the office for better communication, cross-pollination of ideas, and team building.

- The general secretary should be able to articulate the Leadings and Priorities of the Yearly Meeting and facilitate implementation. This involves the development and nurturing of staff and volunteers in serving the needs of the monthly meetings.
- The general secretary should work closely with the clerk of NYYM in fulfilling the leadings and priorities. The relationship should be collegial and mutually supportive.
- The position of general secretary could be a contract position (for example, three to five years, with possibility of renewal).
- The other requirements in the existing job description also hold: be a member (or willing to be) of NYYM monthly meeting; strong spiritual grounding; experience with Quaker process; good communications skills.
- IN PROCESS: We did not come to clarity regarding the supervision structure for the future general secretary. The roles of the personnel and supervisory committees are still being considered.

Additional Recommendations:

Several other suggestions emerged during our interview process.

- The list of tasks for the associate secretary has grown too large, much like the list for the general secretary. It would be good to have some of the associate secretary's tasks (whatever does not strictly require a Quaker point of view) distributed to full- or part-time administrative help.
- We currently contract for bookkeeping services, which might be brought into the office. With more people already on staff, we also need human resources expertise, either contracted or on staff.
- Financial Services has recommended hiring a person with development expertise who might be able to serve the yearly

meeting, Powell House, and Oakwood School together. This idea needs to be explored further to see if it could be done by a consultant or as a part-time staff responsibility.

- Another task that requires much time for current staff and volunteers is event coordination for Fall, Spring, and Summer Sessions. While Summer Sessions are well-managed by Sessions Committee and Silver Bay, local meetings often struggle to meet the needs of Fall and Spring. Adding the task of event planning to an existing or new position in the YM office would free Friends for better fellowship and participation.
- Visitation among meetings and particularly from the yearly meeting to the monthly meetings is a core priority. YM staff (general secretary, associate secretary, field secretaries, ARCH) can manage around 15 visits each per year. To build effective community, members of YM committees and other volunteers need to add to these visits significantly, enhancing their contact with monthly meetings. For example, existing groups such as Spiritual Nurture Working Group, CTC, and Ministry and Pastoral Care could expand and coordinate visitation. Financial help with expenses should be available.
- ARCH should be integrated into the staff and work of NYYM, perhaps as a third field secretary function.
- Powell House staff and NYYM staff should have a defined collaborative relationship, including regular joint meetings and exploration of mutual opportunities.

Future work

We present this report as a beginning, open to seasoning by Friends. We will be contacting monthly meetings as part of the usual letter that solicits comments on the performance of the current general secretary to obtain their sense of what monthly meetings need from a general secretary and staff of NYYM.

Recommendations

1. We recommend that Personnel and the Ad Hoc Committee begin to develop a job description for the general secretary to be presented at the General Services Coordinating

Committee during Coordinating Committee weekend in January for discernment.

2. A committee for recruitment and search for the general secretary should be appointed.
3. Public announcement of the open position should begin soon.

NEW YORK YEARLY MEETING
SPRING SESSIONS
March 31–April 2, 2017

Friends Academy, Locust Valley, NY
Saturday, April 1, 2017, 10:00 a.m.

Lucinda Antrim (Scarsdale), Clerk
Jeffrey Aaron (New Brunswick), Assistant Clerk
Karen Way (New Brunswick), Recording Clerk
Robin Mallison Alpern (Scarsdale), Reading Clerk

2017-04-01. Friends gathered in meeting for worship at 9:00 a.m.

2017-04-02. Near the end of worship, the reading clerk read the roll of the regions and their constituent meetings and worship groups. Friends stood in response. All regions were represented. Kathleen Wooten from Fresh Pond Monthly Meeting in New England Yearly Meeting was introduced as a visitor.

2017-04-03. Liseli Haines (Mohawk Valley) reminded us that we meet in the traditional homeland of the Matinecock people of Lenape heritage, who hunted and fished here, and who live among us today.

2017-04-04. After a break, Friends entered meeting for worship with a concern for business.

2017-04-05. The clerk welcomed Friends, reminding us of the ministry we heard this morning to be open to the Spirit's new offerings. She announced the presence of Listening Friends, identified by their green lanyards, ready to hear any concerns Friends might want to share one-on-one. The clerk introduced the clerks' table, reviewed this morning's agenda, and reminded Friends of the consent agenda.

2017-04-06. Herb Lape (Westbury) welcomed everyone on behalf of the Host Task Group, commending Friends for braving traffic and rain to attend Friday night and today. Herb thanked individuals and the whole Host Task Group for the work needed

to coordinate this gathering. The generosity of Friends Academy makes this work much easier than it would be in other locations.

2017-04-07. Andrea Kelly, the new head of Friends Academy, also welcomed Friends, citing the Quaker heritage, spirit and mission that marks all aspects of the school's operation and educational experience.

2017-04-08. Peter Phillips (Cornwall) reported for the Committee to Revise *Faith and Practice*. The section on "Spiritual Care of Members" in the monthly meeting section of *Faith and Practice* received its second reading (the first reading was offered in Fall Sessions 2016, minute number 2016-11-37). The new version adds language stating that monthly meeting ministry and counsel is responsible for nurturing gifts of ministry in members. The second reading was approved as follows:

SPIRITUAL CARE OF MEMBERS. Seeking divine guidance in their discernment, members of ministry and counsel should seek to:

- foster the spiritual growth of the meeting membership and enhance their religious life and fellowship, including especially the nurture and strengthening of corporate worship of the meeting;
- consider individual needs for guidance and to make provision for personal counsel and assistance in matters of interpersonal relationships among members;
- assist individuals and families confronting problems pertaining to illness, financial matters, marital relations, and decisions of conscience, keeping in mind at all times the limits of ministry and counsel's expertise;
- review annually the spiritual condition of the meeting and its membership and to write the State of the Meeting reports;
- develop programs and conferences, study groups, and public meetings to disseminate information regarding Friends' spiritual concerns and to assist members and attenders to deepen the life of the spirit;
- where desired by local meetings, consider qualifications and make recommendations concerning recording gifts in

- ministry or engagement of pastors or meeting secretaries;
- foster a meeting culture that encourages the emergence of gifts, and assures support and accountability for Friends who carry individual gifts in ministry.

[This replaces the section on p. 122. Note also the language addressing related topics at p. 118.]

2017-04-09. Peter directed Friends to the newly revised *Handbook* page for the Committee to Revise *Faith and Practice* and read several passages from the revision. As this was a first reading, Friends are advised to contact the committee with comments. Second reading will be given at Summer Sessions.

Friends received the report, attached (see page 49).

2017-04-10. Kathleen Wooten (Fresh Pond Monthly Meeting, New England Yearly Meeting) re-introduced herself, describing her mission to strengthen the bonds of love and friendship around New England and beyond, with particular concern for digital ministry and the community we form through various electronic media. Friends approved having the clerk sign Kathleen's letter of introduction, attached (see page 51).

2017-04-11. Regina Baird Haag and Dennis Haag (Adirondack), co-executive directors of Powell House, updated Friends on the excellent participation of youth and adults in Powell House programs. In 2016, Powell House youth programs had 215 individual participants who came a total of 595 times. There were 20 youth conferences, plus a sponsored trip to the White Privilege Conference. Adult/intergenerational programs drew 515 adult visits and 107 children. With much enthusiasm, Regina and Dennis described exciting coming programs and urged Friends to attend.

2017-04-12. Gabrielle Savory Bailey (Chatham-Summit), young adult field secretary, described a moving spiritual experience in which God let her know that the work of the young adult field secretary is no longer hers to do. "It was as if God was touching my face, and turning my head." Gabrielle (Gabi) explained that the work is not yet done. She described the struggle we all feel at times in balancing work life, family life, and Quaker life. Yet that

struggle vanishes when there is one life, connected to God, with integrity. Gabi spoke of the stubborn plant pachysandra, whose roots run so deep and strong that the plant cannot be removed, however one might try. Gabi hopes that she and her meeting can be like pachysandra. The faith of early Friends had extraordinary tenacity and power because they were rooted so deeply in the direct experience of the Divine. This is a much more powerful source than the accompanying virtues of simplicity, peace, integrity, community, and equality. Living deeply in our faith does not mean doing more, but living differently, living our lives directly informed by God. This is a big change for liberal, unprogrammed Friends, but it offers true connection not just to God but to each other. To that end, Gabi has written a pamphlet describing the first steps of nourishing vital multi-age communities rooted in the direct experience of the Divine. She expects that someone else will fill the position of young adult field secretary, but urges us to see that the work belongs to all of us.

Friends received the report. In worship, they spoke in response.

2017-04-13. Steven Mohlke (Ithaca), Kathleen Slattery (Orchard Park), and Karen Snare (Bulls-Head Oswego), among others, invited us to this year's Friends General Conference Gathering, to be held at Niagara University, New York, July 2-8. In addition to the conference, there will be many excellent field trips to places such as Underground Railroad heritage sites, the Erie Canal, and Frank Lloyd Wright's Darwin Martin's house. A roster of speakers and performers will come to the conference, bringing intensive workshops, plenaries, concerts, and multi-media experiences. There are also pre-Gathering retreats. Friends are urged to seek transformation by attending.

2017-04-14. Minutes were read, corrected, and approved over the course of this session.

2017-04-15. After worship, we closed with announcements.

Friends Academy, Locust Valley, NY
Saturday, April 1, 2017, 1:15 p.m.

Lucinda Antrim (Scarsdale), Clerk
Jeffrey Aaron (New Brunswick), Assistant Clerk
Melanie-Claire Mallison (Ithaca), Recording Clerk
Elaine Learnard (Conscience Bay), Reading Clerk

2017-04-16. Friends gathered together in meeting for worship with a concern for business.

2017-04-17. Our clerk reminded us to read the consent agenda, which will be considered for approval tomorrow. She introduced those at the clerks' table and reviewed this afternoon's agenda.

2017-04-18. Christopher Sammond (Poplar Ridge), serving as our general secretary, reported. He invited us to first reflect on the joy of gathering here as a yearly meeting. He noted that his written report will be available later today and attached to the minutes (see page 52), but he has been led to focus on work not included in that report. His overall sense of where we are now is: we are poised. Poised for growth, new life, and change. Poised to enter the Promised Land. He is feeling wistful that he will not be with us though now that it has become clear to him that this is not his work to do as our general secretary. Christopher reminded us of the six areas he felt most needed our attention back in 2006. Since those days, we have worked hard and he is optimistic. Our primary work now is learning to practice our faith with more Light, integrity and passion. He especially called out our need to continue to acknowledge white privilege and work towards equality. "Can we stand in a truth that is broader than the polarization, which divides us as a nation?"—a polarization that demonizes some people as the "other." He encouraged our embracing the introduction of elders to our processes and hopes that we will give strength to our acknowledgement and embracing of those with gifts in ministry, those friends of all ages with gifts to enliven our yearly meeting. His report includes a list of our new and continuing work. Christopher closed with a story of how we have grown, specifically around our yearly meeting budget. Where we were once afraid and paralyzed, we have grown stronger, more trust-

ing, and more faithful to the work we are called to do. We have come a long way and he celebrates our capacity to care for one another and discern way forward in our work together.

Friends received this report.

2017-04-19. Robin Whitely (Chatham-Summit) and Arlene Johnson (Chatham-Summit) reported for the Outreach Working Group. This group grew out of a rising interest in outreach and the temporary suspension of the NYYM Advancement Committee. Robin and Arlene, co-convenors of the Outreach Working Group, read their report (see attached, page 59), which covered their initial work on creating a structure for the work, working with the many monthly meetings that indicated an interest in outreach, and creating two entities—the Steering Circle and the Outreach Practitioners’ Circle. The report details the work of these two bodies and their key learnings to date; effective outreach needs to be a Quaker practice, greeting is not the same as welcoming, and it is worthwhile to consider what is good, better, and best in Quaker outreach. The report ends—“As we grow toward an understanding of how outreach fits within fundamental Quaker practice we are also helping to ensure that the Quaker message remains alive, speaking with power to the condition of those who seek to know it.”

Friends received this report.

2017-04-20. Christopher Sammond, serving as our general secretary, spoke to the staffing structure and changes over the past few years, centering first on the creation of a communications director and hiring of Steven Davison (PYM) to fill that position. Steve is retiring, and Sarah Way (Brooklyn), who was first hired as interim communications director, is now our communications director. Chad Gilmartin (attender, Morning-side) has recently been hired as our web administrator. Chad spoke for a moment to introduce himself. Christopher continued, informing us that because Gabrielle Savory Bailey was led to retire as our young adult field secretary, Emily Provance (Fifteenth Street) has been hired as interim YAFS until the beginning of the 2017 NYYM Summer Sessions. Personnel Committee has begun a search to fill that position.

Friends received this report.

2017-04-21. Melinda Wenner Bradley (Westbury), serving the yearly meeting as our children and youth field secretary, reported (see attached, page 63). She began with the verse from Isaiah 11:6:

The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them.

Melinda especially noted the verse says a small child shall lead, not can. Rather than creating community, we need to be creating a weaving—nurturing relationships, connections, and sustained service to all ages—threading together the touch points of possibility and hope. Melinda listed the three hopes she holds for her continuing work—first, building bridges between generations and between stages of youth; second, gathering and supporting a community of practice among Friends called to youth ministry; and third, asking how to better communicate with and gather older youth.

Friends responded to this report and the reports of the afternoon. The children and youth field secretary report was received.

2017-04-22. The minutes were read and approved over the course of the afternoon.

2017-04-23. Friends returned to gathered worship before adjourning.

Friends Academy, Locust Valley, NY
Sunday, April 2, 2017, 10:15 a.m.

Lucinda Antrim (Scarsdale), Clerk
Jeffrey Aaron (New Brunswick), Assistant Clerk
Bridget Bower (Perry City), Recording Clerk
Rima Segal (Rochester), Reading Clerk

2017-04-24. Friends gathered in worship.

2017-04-25. The clerk introduced the clerks' table, and the agenda was reviewed and adjusted.

2017-04-26. The clerk noted that no concerns had been raised about the consent agenda, and it was approved as follows.

CONSENT AGENDA

Nominating Report for Spring Sessions 2017

Alternatives to Violence Project Board class of 2019

Robert Martin Poughkeepsie Meeting

Karen Reixach Ithaca Meeting

Susan Wolf Ithaca Meeting

Audit Committee class of 2019

Steve Reul Schenectady Meeting

Friends United Meeting Triennial – July 2017

Beverly Archibald Manhattan Meeting

Marissa Badgley Poughkeepsie Meeting

Gabrielle Savory Bailey Chatham Summit Meeting

Emily Provance Fifteenth Street Meeting

Christopher Sammond Poplar Ridge Meeting

Gloria Thompson Manhattan Meeting

Powell House Committee class of 2019

Susan Bingham Montclair Meeting

Recording Clerk class of 2017

Karen Reixach Ithaca Meeting

RELEASE FROM SERVICE

Wilma Campbell – Audit Committee Rochester Meeting

Consent Agenda Report by the Clerk and General Secretary to Spring Sessions, 2017

The following are actions taken on behalf of New York Yearly Meeting by the clerk and general secretary since Fall Sessions 2016. Actions that we were directed to do by minutes during Fall Sessions are not included here.

1. We added our names as to a list of signatories to a letter from faith leaders to Governor Cuomo in support of the Home Stability Support Act. The New York State Council of Churches states: “HSS is a very thoughtful bill crafted by Assemblyman Andrew Hevesi. HSS essentially provides funds to help people who are precariously housed remain in their homes. We believe HSS offers a more humane and cost effective approach than allowing people’s living situations to become so destabilized that they become homeless and end up in a more expensive shelter and motel system. The Act would also help people get out of shelters.” You can find the text of the letter at www.scribd.com/document/343550176/HSSFaith-Leader-Letter#-from_embed.
2. We added our names to “Faith Leader Letter: Welcome Refugees of all Nationalities & Religions.” You can find the letter and its many other signatories at www.interfaithimmigration.org/500oreligiousleaderletter.
3. We issued a press release (available on www.nnym.org) on the politics of division.
4. We designated six NYYM Friends as a delegation to the Standing Rock Sioux tribe as requested by the Witness Coordinating Committee on 12/1/2016.
5. We submitted a comment to the Securities and Exchange Commission on Section 953(b) of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, after consultation with the clerk of the Witness Coordinating Committee. (Available on www.nnym.org)

2017-04-27. Elaine Learnard (Conscience Bay) brought forward one more nomination—Alternate to FUM Triennial, David Herendeen (Farmington). Friends approved.

2017-04-28. Jennifer Perry (Farmington) reported for Nurture Coordinating Committee. NCC engaged with the Friends World Committee for Consultation Pisac minute on “Living Sustainably and Sustaining Life on Earth”, which asks that each yearly meeting to take two radical and concrete actions in support of climate justice. The NCC minute in response is attached

(see page 66). Friends spoke to the minute; many Friends are under the weight of this concern. Friends received the report. (The Friends World Committee for Consultation Section of the Americas worked further on this issue at their March 2017 meeting; a report on their work is attached, see page 68.)

Friends asked that some of the information shared be included in the minutes. Powell House comes under the weight of the Pisac minute and Nurture Coordinating Committee work. Specifically they will consider these issues throughout their strategic plan and facilities assessment process. Another Friend highlighted the section on Summer Sessions 2017 that directly cites the Pisac minute as inspiration: Our work for eco-justice reflects the injunction in the epistle from 2016 Friends World Committee for Consultation World Plenary: “We call on Friends everywhere to take practical actions to sustain life on Earth.”

2017-04-29. Mary Eagleson (Scarsdale), clerk of Witness Coordinating Committee, reported. The New York State Council of Churches has created a political action wing. Letters will go out to monthly meetings from Witness offering the opportunity join the action alert list.

2017-04-30. Mary introduced a concern from Prisons Committee. The governor of New York State is proposing to reduce the number of visiting days with the incarcerated in New York State maximum security prisons. On behalf of Prisons Committee, Judy Meikle (Wilton) read a letter for consideration for the yearly meeting to send to the Governor. This was approved for the NYYM clerk and general secretary to sign and send the letter, attached (see page 70).

2017-04-31. Shirley Way spoke on her trip to El Salvador to facilitate Alternatives to Violence workshops there. She reported that it was very difficult work, but filled with joy. Her report is attached. Friends received the report (see page 71).

2017-04-32. John Cooley (Central Finger Lakes), clerk of General Services Coordinating Committee, presented the 2016 end-of-year Treasurers’ Report on behalf of Paula McClure. The report, attached (see page 81), shows a net increase of over thirty-six thousand dollars. This is due to a combination of

not requiring a full audit this year on the expense side and a transfer in of the unused balance of the YFIR Fund. In addition, faithful fulfillment of covenant donations, generous donations of individual donors AND careful stewardship of resources contributed to our successful year. The 2016 report is the last year that will not show line-by-line ARCH (Aging Resources Consultation Help) grant figures. Mary Williams, as the new treasurer, is combining the Trustee and Operating funds work as of First Month 1, 2017.

The report was received.

2017-04-33. John requested affirmation from the body to make a transfer of \$36,000 from the 2016 funds to the 2017 budget line “Other Sources of Revenue, from Provision for Next Budget.” Friends approved the transfer.

2017-04-34. John also reported for the Search Committee for a general secretary. The deadline was yesterday and they have begun consideration of applications. The report was received.

2017-04-35. Melanie-Claire Mallison (Ithaca), clerk of Sessions Committee, announced that at Summer Sessions 2017, Sessions Committee will bring recommendations for a Pay as Led process for the meeting to consider and possibly approve for the 2018 Summer Sessions at Silver Bay.

Pay as Led (PaL) is a Quakerly way to consider our financial condition when registering to attend our Summer Sessions and paying for our accommodations, working within the given guidelines of the detailed PaL process. So, through this process, we ask everyone to prayerfully consider: how am I led to participate in my NYYM sessions?

There are two motivations for all of us to consider moving forward with a Pay as Led process; first, to make it more affordable for Friends who have had to stretch mightily in the past in order to be able to attend Summer Sessions, and second to better welcome Friends who may have stayed away from Summer Sessions because of cost. We hope that PaL will open up the yearly meeting experience to more Friends.

Sessions Committee has conferred with members of the Financial Services Committee and has begun a conversation

with the NYYM Trustees to make sure that we are moving forward in good faith in such a process, while still acting with prudence in accepting the risks, including the financial risks.

We base some of this faith in our knowledge of the New York Yearly Meeting Friends and some in the experience of New England Yearly Meeting successfully using a PaL process for their past three Summer Sessions.

Still. A Pay as Led process will require a leap of faith from all of us. We will have to take an active part in detailed planning and discussion and discernment, while acknowledging issues of race, class, wage inequalities, and accepting some level of inevitable struggle around trust, fairness and integrity.

But we are saying that the leap is what brings us closer to the Beloved Community, and the completeness of our Religious Society of Friends.

Sessions Committee encourages each of you to keep a close eye on the NYYM website and publications for committee reports, charts, and recommendations regarding the creation of the PaL process for New York Yearly Meeting. Most especially, we encourage your active engagement with the committee prior to and during 2017 Summer Sessions. The Ad Hoc PaL committee is Linda Houser (Purchase), Cheshire Frager (Flushing), Melanie-Claire Mallison (Ithaca), Dawn Pozzi (Rochester), Christopher Sammond (Poplar Ridge), and Doug Way (New Brunswick). Serving as resources to the PaL Committee are Sunfire Kazmayer (Easton), Roseann Press (Housatonic) and Mary Williams (Bulls-Head Oswego). We are in the *Yearbook*!

2017-04-36. Melanie-Claire, continuing as Sessions Committee's Spring Fall Sessions coordinator and liaison, expressed her appreciation to the Host Task Group and the region for hosting Spring Sessions. We had a total of 129 participants this weekend; 8 youth and 121 adults. She announced dates for Summer and Fall sessions 2017 (July 23-29 at Silver Bay Association, and November 10-12 at Caldwell University in New Jersey and hosted by All Friends Regional Meeting, respectively). After the 2018 Fall Sessions, the date for Fall Sessions will move to the first weekend in November to avoid the conflict with the FCNL Annual Meeting.

Friends received the report.

2017-04-37. Deb Wood reported for the Nurture Coordinating Committee on the revised minute of exercise regarding the Friends United Meeting's hiring practices and the Brooklyn Meeting minute in response. Originally presented in minute 2016-11-33 at Fall Sessions 2016, this minute of exercise was returned to Nurture Coordinating Committee for additional work and clarification. Deb read the revised minute, attached (see page 74). The meeting approved the minute.

2017-04-38. The minutes were read and approved over the course of the morning. The meeting closed with a period of worship, followed by announcements.

ATTACHMENTS

Changes to NYYM *Handbook* page revision (first reading)

COMMITTEE TO REVISE *FAITH AND PRACTICE*

See minute 2017-04-09, p. 38

History

The Committee to Revise *Faith and Practice* (“the committee”) was created in the fall of 1977 by the clerk of the yearly meeting and subsequently by the Representative Meeting. Initially its charge was to address the membership of children.

From 1977 until 1988, the yearly meeting appointed members to one-year terms. Since the committee was considered *ad hoc*, there were no restrictions on successive appointments during the early years.

With the passage of time, the committee identified additional sections of *Faith and Practice* in which material needed to be changed or added: sexist language, prison reform, troubled marriages, separation and divorce, death and dying, and human sexuality. The committee also considered matters of Quaker spirituality, such as ensuring that references to Christ remained in our book of discipline while recognizing that the spirituality of our faith ranged from Christian to universalist, including atheists, non-theists and agnostics as members. Friends individually, and through suggestions from monthly meetings, called on the committee to consider most sections of the book. The second part of the book, “Practice and Procedure,” received final approval in July 1987; the first part, “Faith,” in July 1995. The most recent printed edition was approved in April 2014. Changes approved subsequently are posted on the yearly meeting website.

Committee Responsibilities and Process for Proposed Changes

The committee is charged with the consideration of proposed changes to our book of discipline and the preparation and presentation of such proposals to the body at Sessions.

The process associated with its charge was approved at

Summer Sessions 2016 as follows:

“Proposed revisions to *Faith and Practice* may originate in a monthly or regional or a yearly meeting body. When the proposed revision has been seasoned by the Committee to Revise *Faith and Practice* and approved by Ministry Coordinating Committee, the Committee to Revise *Faith and 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.”

Functions and Activities

1. The committee functions under the care of the Ministry Coordinating Committee, to which the committee reports. The Ministry Coordinating Committee may offer guidance and counsel to the committee’s work and help facilitating Friends’ understanding of committee proposals for revision.
2. The committee meets at all Sessions and at other times as needed to fulfill its responsibilities. Between committee meetings originating bodies (i.e., a monthly, regional or yearly meeting body) may write suggestions for new sections or for changes in sections already published as set forth above in the section entitled “...Process for Proposed Changes.”
3. The committee is on call to explain suggested revisions and to listen to Friends’ thoughts and concerns.

Organization and Method of Appointment

Committee members are appointed for three-year staggered terms, with about one-third of the members having their terms end each year. The yearly meeting’s limit of two successive terms applies to appointees. The yearly meeting’s Nominating Committee recommends appointments, for subsequent approval by the yearly meeting.

Only members of the New York Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends may be appointed to the committee.

The committee selects its own clerk and recording clerk for one-year terms and names a representative to the Ministry Coordinating Committee for a one-year term as well.

Meeting Times & Places

The committee meets at all Sessions, at a date, time and place selected by the Committee's clerk, typically on site at the scheduled Session, and announced in advance, typically in *Spark* and on site at the scheduled Session. All committee meetings at Sessions are open meetings. The committee's clerk may schedule additional meetings.

Communication on all matters in connection with the committee's work abide by the guidelines set forth in the minute approved at Fall Sessions 2016 entitled "Use of Technology in The Conduct Of Business".

Finances

The expenses of the committee are met by an appropriation in the operating budget. Sales of *Faith and Practice* are intended to cover the costs of its printing.

Travel Minute for Kathleen Wooten, New England Yearly Meeting

See minute 2017-04-10, p. 38

Fresh Pond Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends
October 2, 2016

Dear Friends of New England Yearly Meeting:

We send you warm greetings with our member Kathleen Wooten. A member in good standing of Fresh Pond Monthly Meeting, Kathleen travels among Friends with a strong concern for the many ways we connect and are in relationship with each other. Kathleen hopes that her visits serve to strengthen the bonds of love and friendship around New England and beyond. While face-to-face meetings are the foundation of Kathleen's practice, she carries a concern for digital ministry and the ways we connect, communicate, and support each other through various electronic media. We have witnessed and benefitted from this ministry ourselves.

We experience Kathleen as carefully listening for the ways that Spirit is at work, carrying new Truth as it Prospers among Friends.

Please welcome Kathleen as she visits among you. We look forward to hearing from her how the Spirit is moving among Friends in New England.

On behalf of Fresh Pond Meeting,

Laura Street and Mary Hopkins,
Co-clerks

General Secretary's Report: Where We've Been, Where We Are, and Where We Are Called

See minute 2017-04-18, p. 40

The following report incorporates both the spoken report delivered at Spring Sessions and the written report prepared ahead of time. There was so much overlap between the two that it didn't make sense to have separate oral and written reports. The result is long, but I hope worth the read.

— Christopher Sammond, general secretary

Good afternoon, Friends. Each year when I write up the report on the previous year's work for my Advance Report, I have an acute sense of both how far we have come, and also how much work I see before us. As I wrap up my work serving you as general secretary, I feel both of those sentiments even more acutely. In my reports to our sessions I usually focus on reflecting back to this body my sense of our current condition as a whole yearly meeting. Today it seems important to not only name where I see us in the moment, but also where we are in the arc of our life as a yearly meeting, the work we have done, work we are engaged in, and the work I see still before us.

Here is my overall sense, one I'll flesh out in what is to follow: We are poised. We are poised on the brink of growth in depth, growth in numbers, growth in witness, and growth in overall health. And as I prepare to leave this service at this particular point in the life of this yearly meeting, I must confess I feel like Moses knowing he won't get to enter into the Promised Land with the rest of the Hebrew host. I witness the energy and life

in this body, and see the potential ahead, and I am wistful, sad to not be a part of it, but also clear that that is not my work, but someone else's.

While I am optimistic about our current trajectory, I am not a Pollyanna. (And when one of my readers read that statement, her response was "Ha!", meaning that she indeed thought that I did bring a Pollyanna's optimism to my view of our condition. But I actually witness myself as being more of an Eeyore in temperament, so I'm not sure I agree with her.)

About three years ago I met with our trustees to name my concern for our condition, and of the need for the yearly meeting organization to step up with all the resources we can muster in order to address the erosion in our meetings' capacity to revitalize themselves. The need for that level of commitment has not changed. We recently had two monthly meetings alert us to their sense that they don't anticipate being able to keep the doors open for too many more years. I habitually encounter Friends who say that they are not spiritually fed in their monthly meetings. I hear of unresolved conflicts, young families leaving due to insensitivity in their new meeting, young adults who are deeply struggling to find a way into being a part of our Society, Friends of color experiencing racism in our yearly meeting, Friends deeply questioning how to live out our faith in the current political landscape. What has changed, however, is that in these past three years, the yearly meeting organization, and the yearly meeting as a whole, have radically increased in our capacity to address those problems and others.

My confidence comes from two sources: we have done a lot and grown in the doing; and I witness new flexibility, creativity, and energy in how we are addressing where we need to grow.

Some of what we have done:

At our Summer Sessions, 2006, I named six areas which needed attention and care:

1. Closing the divide that separates monthly meetings from the yearly meeting organizational structure.
2. Coming to a unified, clear vision of who we are, where we are going, and why.
3. Passing on the substance of our faith to our children.

4. Becoming more skillful at resolving conflict.
5. Better welcoming and integrating the newcomers who are joining us.
6. Addressing the spiritual nurture of existing Friends.

We have done, or are doing, much of this work. Some of it is never “done.”

- We have significantly lessened the substantial gap between those Friends with little interest in the work of the yearly meeting organization and those who value it greatly.
- With the work of the Priorities Working Group, this body has united in a common vision of our work as a yearly meeting.
- With the hiring of a children and youth field secretary (CYFS), creating the Monthly Meeting Partner Project, holding the Youth Institutes through the support of the Powell House youth directors, the Youth Committee, and the CYFS, and a clear intentionality to address the spiritual nurture of our youngest Friends, we are taking up the work of passing on our practice to our children.
- Our Conflict Transformation Committee has become an effective resource for our monthly meetings, our committees, and our sessions. We have become more skillful in addressing conflict, and less fearful of facing it head on.
- Our young adult field secretary has helped us to become more skillful at welcoming and integrating not just young adults, but Friends of all ages. Our new Outreach Working Group is creating a community of practice which is energizing and inspiring the fifteen monthly meetings currently participating in it, and whose work is addressing the perpetual requests for help from monthly meetings in how to do more effective outreach.
- Through having the Drawing Out Gifts, Kindling the Fire, and most recently, the Tending the Garden series of workshops and retreats, we have formed a broadly based community of Friends who carry a passionate concern for the spiritual nurture of this yearly meeting.

The economic crash of 2008 had a lot of Quaker institutions doing significant soul-searching as to their vision and mission. Our yearly meeting organization was no exception. We engaged in a three and a half year process of visiting all of our monthly meetings and as many of our worship groups as possible, and listening for where the Life was in those communities, and how the rest of the yearly meeting could support that Life. Through a process of listening and discernment, we ultimately united in our Statement of Leadings and Priorities, a broad sense of how to prioritize the budgeting of our operating budget, our trustee managed funds, and our staff time. We are currently living into that process, with the Leadings and Priorities Support Working Group engaged in assessing just how well the yearly meeting organization is following up on what we heard from our grass roots constituency.

Part way through that process, I named the need for us as an organization to focus on three areas in order to maintain our fiscal health and ability as an organization to serve our constituency well: Vision, Communication, and Development. As I just mentioned, we did come through a process with a coherent vision for our common work. And we created a Development Committee, whose contributions to our budget have helped to offset cuts in our Covenant Donations made after the 2008 crash. We created the new job description for our communications director, and have gradually, sometimes haltingly, moved into the digital age in our communication. Our new website should be launched very soon, and we are doing a better job of communicating the work that the contributions from our monthly meetings and individual Friends support. We are just starting to become marginally effective at communicating with our younger members. With that, and our overall communication, we still need to do more to communicate to our grass roots and to the world the work in which we are engaged.

We have done **a lot**. I hope that this historical perspective is helpful in understanding where we are, and where I see us poised to go.

Until recently, the yearly meeting organization had enough financial support, and therefore staff time, to not do much more than maintain the existing structure, to keep the doors open,

as it were. For years I witnessed crying needs in our monthly meetings for which our minimal staff simply did not have the time or resources to address. In more recent years, with the addition of two more field staff, the young adult field secretary and children and youth field secretary, along with those now bringing the work of ARCH to our monthly meetings, I see us finally having barely enough of a staff presence to meaningfully address the needs in the field. Now Friends in our monthly meetings may, I hope over time, be less mystified as to what the covenant donations from their monthly meetings goes to support.

We have done the work necessary to address the needs of our community. And, we are stretching mightily to do so. Thanks to generous contributions from individual Friends and from the reallocation of trust funds, we are sustaining the structure necessary to do the work that I strongly feel is necessary. We are stretching, and we are making that stretch, currently. And we will need to continue to stretch. In 2019, a generous multi-year grant to the annual appeal will end at the same time the Shoemaker grant supporting about half of the children and youth field secretary's salary will end, at the same time that ARCH has said that it is possible that their grant from FFA will be reduced. This is cause for concern, and prudent planning. It is also, I hope, a motivation for Friends to dig deep to support this ongoing work. This year's budget surplus is the result of a series of one-off events, none of which I see happening next year, or in subsequent years. A surplus this year does not mean that we can pause in our support of this ongoing work. Without those one-off events, this year would have shown a deficit, not a surplus.

We need to not allow ourselves to either lose focus or to lose heart. I have seen Friends really step up to the plate to support this ongoing work, with many new Friends giving to the annual appeal this year, and giving substantial sums. In the arc of our work, we are on the right track, and Friends are stepping up in surprising ways to support that work.

We are not in the Promised Land, not yet, by any means. And I have faith. I have faith in us; I have faith in God; and I have faith that we are pointed in the right direction, and moving

there with determination and passion.

Our work as a community will never be done. That's the nature of building community. Here is some of the work in which we are mid-stride, or just opening into:

- Supporting the spiritual deepening of Friends of all ages
- Revitalizing our monthly meetings
- Addressing systemic racism. Much of the strife and discord which currently embroils our nation can be traced back to issues of race and racism. As a yearly meeting, we have begun to enter into the work of seeing how systemic racism impacts our lives and our society. We sent over one hundred Friends to the White Privilege Conference, and have taken further steps to enter more deeply into this work. This is work about becoming more conscious, and as such is spiritual work as much as work in the world. I am extremely grateful for those Friends in this yearly meeting who have been carrying this ministry.
- Learning to welcome “the Other.” Historically, Friends have been above divisions, going back to our being unwilling to take sides in the American revolution, to feeding starving Germans after WWI, refusing to buy into the demonization of “the Hun” promoted by our governments propaganda, to our bringing medical supplies to Vietnam in the midst of the Vietnam War. Can we once again stand in a truth that is broader than the polarization which divides us as a nation?
- Making Summer Sessions accessible to any Friend led to be there. Our exploration of a “Pay as Led” structure is perhaps one viable solution to a serious problem which must be addressed.
- Redefining what it means to be a young adult in this yearly meeting
- Bridging the gap in our distinction between “ministry” and “witness”
- Embracing gifts in ministry the way we have embraced gifts in elders
- Expanding the Monthly Meeting Partner Project, which helps our meetings to more effectively integrate their

youngest members into the fabric of the MM

- Changing our culture around money; recognizing, as early Friends did, that money is a spiritual issue, not separate from our spiritual life
- Changing the staffing structure which supports the ARCH program
- Nurturing the current influx of newcomers; there is quite a flood right now. How do we help them become a part of us?
- Holding ourselves accountable to our named priorities, even if that means making some hard choices
- Having our nominating committees operating as Spirit-led engines of gifts-development for all our members and attenders. I've discussed the problem of how hard our nominating committee has been struggling to find Friends willing to serve on our committees. Our clerk, assistant clerk and myself have committed to work with our quarters and regions to advocate for Friends with that gift of discerning the gifts of others to do this work for our larger community.
- Exploring new structures other than committees for organizing our work as a community. Some work is best done by centralized committees, such as Audit, Financial Services, etc. Some things are best done through open-ended networks, such as Advancement and Outreach, supporting youth, and spiritual nurture. We have done some experimenting in this area, and those experiments have been bearing promising results.
- Seeking a corporate response to the divisiveness of our nation

I have a nudge to close with an anecdote, one which illustrates just how far we have come as a community, in trusting each other, in trusting God. Many of you were present at Fall Sessions in 2009, where we faced a \$4000 shortfall in the budget. We spent no less than three plenary sessions agonizing about what to do about that shortfall. We were paralyzed. We never did come to clarity as to how specifically we would address that problem, but

laid it over until the following Spring Session. Contrast that with summer sessions last year, when we were faced with a last-minute request for \$10,000 from the ARCH program to finish out that same year (and with a \$20,000 shortfall in their overall budget and the need for yet more money than **that** added to 2017's budget). Friends were clear to move forward, though still uncertain about the long-term finances for the program. After that decision, two Friends came forward, offering substantial contributions, alleviating not only the immediate need, but also much of the projected need for the 2017 budget. The decision was easy. We were clear, we were not afraid.

We have come a long, long way. More and more, we are loosening up and are willing to experiment. We have changed the schedule of our summer sessions, which used to seem to be set in stone, and we have experimented with changes not just once, but multiple times. We are experimenting with non-committee structures for organizing our work. We may well try a pay-as-led approach to summer sessions. I could go on.

We have the financial resources to do the work that needs to be done. What I have seen is that if we are doing the work that needs to be done, the work we are called to do, Friends have, and will, step forward to support it.

I celebrate our growth in faith, our growth in trust, and our expanding capacity to care for one another.

Report from Outreach Working Group (OWG)

See minute 2017-04-19, p. 41

It was a year ago, at Spring Sessions, that the Outreach Working Group (OWG) began to take form. In response to a rising interest in Quaker outreach within NYYM and to the temporary suspension of the Advancement Committee, the general secretary invited us (Robin Whitely and Arlene Johnson) to become co-conveners of an as-yet-undefined Outreach Working Group, reporting to Ministry Coordinating Committee, to advance and nourish the growing interest in outreach that was expressed in the Statement of Leadings and Priorities approved by the yearly meeting in 2014.

Initially, the task was to devise a structure and process that could gather and grow the energy for outreach as it existed around New York Yearly Meeting. Thank you to all of you — Friends and NYYM staff—who assisted in clarifying that structure. Through several months of discernment and talking with many of you, it appeared that it was important initially to focus on nourishing the energy for outreach coming from monthly meetings. We needed a structure for sharing information, getting new ideas, encouraging each other, learning outreach skills and methods—and, just as important, very gently holding each other accountable for moving ahead with outreach efforts.

The structure that emerged consists of two bodies, each of which is facilitated by us as co-conveners: (1) The first is a Steering Circle that provides perspective, advice and counsel on direction, process and goals of the OWG within the context of NYYM and Quaker practice. The members of the Steering Circle are Jeffrey Aaron, Melinda Wenner Bradley, Bob Frick and Miranda von Salis. (2) The second group is the Outreach Practitioners' Circle made up of representatives of monthly meetings who answered an invitation to pursue more effective outreach. Last fall every monthly meeting was invited to join the Practitioners' Circle by committing to participate in bi-monthly conference calls and to take some action—whether large or small—to promote Quaker outreach. We expected that perhaps five or six meetings would accept this invitation and accountability, but *nearly one-third of monthly meetings responded with interest*. Eventually fifteen monthly meetings became part of the Outreach Practitioners' Circle and are currently on the OPC list¹.

At this point, six months into the process, we have had four conference call meetings with the Outreach Practitioners' Circle. Each ninety-minute call has had a topic, agenda, advance reading and often a “homework assignment.” Each of these calls has been rich—rich in spirit, in the content shared, in the ideas that emerged, and in a growing sense of energy and potential for Quaker outreach. (We should also say that the immediacy of the

¹ The following monthly meetings are at present on the Outreach Practitioners' Circle (OPC) list: Albany, Binghamton, Buffalo, Chatham Summit, Conscience Bay, Easton, Flushing, Mohawk Valley, Manasquan, New Brunswick, Old Chatham, Rahway-Plainfield, Saratoga, Scarsdale, and Wilton.

calls has been aided by use of NYYM's Zoom video conference account and the ability to see each other as we conference.) Our sense is that the spirit is indeed moving among us to create a community of practice. Though we have not met in person, we are becoming a virtual community of monthly meetings who share a deep commitment to outreach and, who, through sharing and listening and working together, are expanding our outreach and learning to make it more effective. To quote one OPC member, "I am getting a lot of good suggestions for activities and a lot of inspiration to keep doing them. It helps to know there is a larger community out there working on the same issues."

For our conference calls we have been blessed to have guest resource people such as Emily Provance and Melinda Wenner Bradley; we have drawn upon existing resources from FGC; and we have started to create our own outreach resources that will eventually be available on the NYYM website. It would be impossible to share fully all that is happening within the OPC or within the participating monthly meetings, so we'll take the approach of sharing just a few of our key learnings to date.

- Effective outreach needs to be a Quaker practice. We are discovering that, to be effective, outreach cannot be just an initiative, program, or special event. It must be a *practice* that is nourished and motivated by spirit, that is an *ongoing part of the life of the meeting*, linked to all committee work and grounded in the historic tradition of sharing the good news. We are working toward understanding what outreach looks like when it is an ongoing, fundamental practice with a monthly meeting.
- Greeting is not the same as Welcoming. We have been exploring the difference between *greeting* visitors and truly *welcoming* them. It turns out that welcoming has many dimensions, both spoken and unspoken, starting with the signage out front and extending to what is on our websites and how we follow up with inquirers. In fact, we started developing a checklist of multiple good ideas and best practices for welcoming newcomers; that checklist has now grown to *five pages!* (It will soon be on the NYYM website if you'd like to check it out.) It also turns out that becoming a truly welcoming meeting may be **the most important first**

step in outreach. Research shows that feeling connected and feeling that “I could fit in here” is the major determinant in whether people return to our meetings.

- It is worthwhile to consider what is Good, Better and Best in Quaker Outreach. On one hand there is a “just do it” aspect of outreach. Doing something is almost always better than doing nothing. But, as we are learning, most outreach we do could be improved—by understanding our strengths as meetings, by being more conscious of the welcoming process, by being more intentional in crafting our messages, and by enlarging our knowledge of the options and approaches for outreach. For example, we’ve spent time thinking how we describe ourselves and how we respond to the question “What is a Quaker?” The result is a short paper on “Discovering and Shaping Your Own Quaker Kernel” and a role play process for practicing our own responses to that question. This, too, will shortly be available on the NYYM website.

IN SUMMARY

The first year of work for the Outreach Working Group has been filled with the joy of discernment, discovery, learning and an emerging, spirit-filled community of practice. We personally feel gratitude for being part of that process.

The OWG was, from the outset, a two-year program, designed to have a sunset and re-evaluation in June, 2018. So, as OWG enters its second year we are thinking about how to build on our work so far and whether there should be any changes in how we operate in the next twelve months. We will be seeking the advice of MCC and our Steering Circle and also invite and welcome ideas from all Friends.

It seems clear to us that the spirit is moving to inspire outreach. It is important that, together, we find the structures and process to keep these leadings alive in order to continually improve our messages and welcome. As we grow toward an understanding of how outreach fits within fundamental Quaker practice we are also helping to ensure that the Quaker message remains alive, speaking with power to the condition of those who seek to know it.

Report from Children and Youth Field Secretary

See minute 2017-04-21, p. 42

I'm led to begin this report with a verse from the chapter in Isaiah that guides our Sessions theme this year:

The wolf shall live with the lamb,
the leopard shall lie down with the kid,
the calf and the lion and the fatling together,
and a little child shall lead them.

Isaiah 11:6, New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

The verse offers that the young will lead us. Not can, but shall. That seems like a good place to begin a report on the work of supporting our children and youth in New York Yearly Meeting. Possibility and hope. These are things I feel in my work every day. And I'd also like to suggest that this verse about new ways of being in relationship. The lion and the lamb are both led by the little child. We're asked to stretch our belief and our trust in that image. As we struggle in our nation to relate to "the other" and under the weight of political polarization, as Friends seek peace and justice in a world aching for succor, how are we sustained by the relationships in our meetings? How are we authentically taking care of one another, and offering spiritual companionship to each other when we travel in the world between First Days? How do our relationships reach across age and experience? In my work, I am seeking new ways to connect and sustain us whether we are the child, the youth, a parent, or another adult led to serve children and youth programs in a meeting community.

During the time since my last report to the body at Fall Sessions in November, my work has been to be in relationship and nurture relationships in several ways. I've been on ten visits to monthly meetings, six of those to our Partner Project meetings. Friends in Montclair Meeting and Wilton Meeting are gathering for Listening Sessions, an opportunity to process together the themes lifted up in the YM survey about meeting life, including experiences of welcome and inclusion. We're identifying growing edges and hopes as a meeting community, and together creating next steps in relationship to one another, to deepen in Spirit, and to grow as multi-age community. I am

deeply grateful to Friends in the partner meetings for their candor in this sharing, and their care of one another. I'm very hopeful about moving forward, and what we're learning with each other. This is a touchpoint of possibility and hope, and the yearly meeting will be seeking applications for two more meetings to join the Partner Project before Summer Sessions.

I seem always to be re-learning the lesson that as Friends our spiritual journeys are about process and not a "product," and this is true for the Partner Project as well. Our work is about being present to where we are and how we are in relationship with each other in this moment, and with that knowing, seeing where we want to go next and moving toward it together.

I've had the joy of leading First Day programs for children and youth at both partner meetings and on other monthly meeting visits. Looking back I realize that on three occasions, the lesson was connected to hospitality and community. These are the questions we're asking in the Partner Project: 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 activity we're doing with children in the partner meetings, which is serving as their Listening Session, lifts up these questions, and they are for all of us.

Since the fall, Yearly Meeting Friends have also gathered in two quarters for three Quaker Family Meetups, and two more are planned for the spring. These are simple occasions for families in a quarter or region to gather to be in relationship with one another. The children play, and the adults have worship sharing and fellowship together. The thread that has run through all three events has been a desire to better know and support one another. One participant said, "We need a cooperative!" So we're seeking mutual assistance, another way to be in relationship, through events that gather us across distances and different meeting communities.

Reading the state of the meeting reports, I've been moved by the descriptions of what's happening in meetings, whether it's a thriving First Day program, the pleasure of attending to children when they are there, or a yearning for more children and families.

One young Friend from Albany Meeting, named Aldo Kinchy

Meltz, said some important things in their state of the meeting report, and I have his permission to share this excerpt:

There is something different every week at First Day School. We learn what Quakers do. We learn about famous Quakers. We wish First Day School was bigger.

We get to talk to the adults about things. They listen to us.

Sitting in silence can be kind of long and boring, the adults are sitting and listening for God. We are sitting and waiting.

We would like to learn more games that Quakers do. The people of Albany Meeting are kind.

Aldo lifts up big ideas for us to attend to, for all ages: There's something new every week when we gather. We balance knowing our history with the "doing" of today. We talk and are in relationship. "They listen to us." Sitting in silence may not meet everyone's needs. Let's value play, and kindness. Wishing there were more of us.

I've shared with Nurture CC a longer report on the CYFS work, and I'm glad to share that with others. Here are some things I'm carrying hopes for, that exist are in the spaces between the visits and projects and emails and programs:

- Building bridges between generations and between stages of youth. How do we support the child moving from child care to First Day programs? the teen moving from FDS to youth programs? the youth moving into young adulthood?
- Gathering and supporting a community of practice among Friends called to youth ministry. There is always more wisdom in the circle of people gathered. Sharing information and experiences and apprenticing ourselves to one another. Another way of being in relationship. We made a wonderful start on this work in the Farmington-Scipio Region, at the Youth Institute there in March. The planning group for children and youth programs at these Sessions was another example—Friends with deep experience in

YM youth programs and others for whom this was their first time doing something like this; joining hands, sharing institutional memory and thinking in new ways together.

- How to better communicate with and gathering older youth. This one has a specific intention: Emily Provance and I are planning an online listening circle in the near future, focused on hearing from youth and young adults about how better communicate with them. Please watch for that and help us gather with these groups; we will be glad to share what we learn beyond how it supports our staff service to them.

My friend Robin Mohr talks about being “the Quakers the world needs us to be.” Clearly, this is true now more than ever. I would challenge us to consider how it is the relationships between us that sustain us and help us to grow, particularly for our children and youth, and their families.

Minute from Nurture Coordinating Committee to the Yearly Meeting Body

See minute 2017-04-28, p.44

In January of 2016, at the Friends World Committee for Consultation World Plenary in Pisac, Peru, the body gathered wrote a minute: “Living Sustainably and Sustaining Life on Earth.” In this minute, that body asked each of FWCC’s constituent yearly meetings to discern and commit to two radical, concrete actions in support of climate justice.

To this date, New York Yearly Meeting has not responded to the Pisac minute, although it has been discussed in various venues.

The yearly meeting’s relationship with FWCC falls under the care of Nurture Coordinating Committee, and so it is our responsibility to be faithful in our care of that relationship. This is why we are bringing this minute to your attention today.

We realize that New York Yearly Meeting has defined structures in place—committees and working groups that have the charge of holding the concern of sustainability, and the Friends serving in those capacities are doing so faithfully. It is possible

that the prophetic voice needed to move us toward our response to the Pisac minute will come through one or more of the Friends already serving in those capacities. It is equally possible that the prophetic voice will come through some other Friend or Friends among us—and so, we are holding this up to the entire body.

As we held this concern in worship last night, Spirit moved us in powerful and unexpected ways. We knew that to bring this concern to you was important, but simply to communicate the concern was not enough; we also had to respond by taking our own concrete steps.

We felt empowered to commit to actions appropriate to the work of Nurture Coordinating Committee. FWCC has created a QuakerSpeak video, “A Quaker Approach to Sustainability,” along with accompanying program and discussion resources for adults and youth. We charged Melinda Wenner Bradley, children and youth field secretary, to promote these resources widely among Friends serving in Religious Education capacities. We asked Emily Provance, interim young adult field secretary, to post the video on the Young Adult Friends Facebook page and to host a video conference for Friends to share their responses to it. We directed Aging Concerns and Callie Janoff, ARCH director, to also explore uses of the video and to consider the Pisac minute in the light of the committee’s recent conversation about aging and activism. We will ask other committees under the care of Nurture Coordinating Committee, including the Powell House Committee, to also consider how they can commit to concrete actions.

Nurture Coordinating Committee did not intend to engage with this minute as part of last night’s committee meeting. It was not on our agenda. But God worked among us, and we listened to the unfolding of the moment. We were faithful to responding to this leading within the scope of the Nurture Coordinating Committee, and we were clear where our work stopped. We were clear that to move further forward, we needed to bring before all of you the leadings of the Spirit and this question: Friends, what canst thou say?

Link to the original minute, for historic reference: fwcc.world/fwcc-news/living-sustainably-and-sustaining-life-on-earth-the-minute-from-the-plenary

Report from The Friends World Committee for Consultation Section of the Americas

See minute 2017-04-28, p. 45

On Friday, March 24, seventeen Friends met to discuss the sustainably minute approved at Pisac. We had three working groups and here is a report on what transpired. We'd like to begin with a quote from Isaac Penington:

“Sink down to the Seed... and thou shalt find by sweet experience that the Lord knows.... and will lead....to the inheritance of Life.”

Powerful though it was in many ways, we felt the Sustainability minute at Pisac dealt mainly with mitigating anticipated climate disruption. We strongly feel Friends need to go further. Since climate disruption is already adversely affecting the earth as well as the lives of people and other living beings, we need to consider how we can act in solidarity with communities affected by climate disruption as they strive to respond, resist or adapt. We also need to consider ways in which we can help to restore the damage caused to the Earth.

We see a need for a collective as well as personal spiritual awakening leading to transformative spirit-led action. To be effective, we need to express joy in the changes we have made in our lives and share our joy with others. To be spiritually grounded, we need to deepen our relationship with nature and connect with God's creation. We suggest that Friends traveling in the ministry through FWCC share FWCC's material on sustainability and collect stories about the effects of climate disruption on local communities and how they are responding. We urge each one of us to carry out our Quaker testimony on earth care and lift it up to all the bodies we are part of.

Queries: How are we as Quakers living our lives as if climate disruption is real and really matters? How are we showing solidarity with indigenous and marginalized peoples affected by climate disruption?

El viernes por la noche, se reunieron diecisiete Amigos para discutir la minuta aprobada en Pisac acerca de la sostenibilidad. Nos dividimos en tres grupos de trabajo y a continuación

les doy un informe de lo que ocurrió. Quisiéramos empezar con un extracto de Isaac Penington:

“Húndete hasta la Semilla...y encontrarás por dulce experiencia que el Señor [la] conoce...y [la] ha de guiar hasta la heredad de la vida.”

Aun cuando fuese poderosa en muchas maneras la minuta sobre la Sostenibilidad de Pisac, ésta tuvo que ver más que nada con reducir el impacto esperado de la disrupción climática. Tenemos la fuerte opinión que los Amigos tienen que ir más allá. Ya que la disrupción del clima está afectando de forma nociva tanto a la tierra como a las vidas de las personas y otros seres vivos, debemos considerar cómo podemos actuar de forma solidaria con las comunidades afectadas por la disrupción climática mientras que éstas luchan por responder, resistir o adaptarse. También nos toca considerar formas en las cuales podemos prestar apoyo en el proceso de restauración de los daños de la Tierra.

Vemos la necesidad de un despertar espiritual al nivel colectivo así como al nivel personal, el cual nos pueda guiar hasta la acción transformadora dirigida por el Espíritu. Para ser mayormente eficaces, tenemos que expresar el gozo en los cambios que hemos hecho en nuestras vidas y compartirlo con los demás. Para estar arraigados espiritualmente, tenemos que profundizar nuestra relación con la naturaleza y conectarnos con la creación de Dios. Sugerimos que los Amigos líderes que están viajando en el ministerio a través del CMCA compartan los materiales del CMCA sobre la sostenibilidad, y que reúnan historias acerca de los efectos de la disrupción climática sobre las comunidades locales y las maneras en que las mismas están respondiendo. Animamos a cada uno de nosotros que lleve consigo nuestro testimonio cuáquero sobre el cuidado de la Tierra y que llame la atención de todos los entes de los cuales forma parte, a este tema.

Preguntas: *¿Cómo estamos viviendo nuestras vidas nosotros como cuáqueros a la luz de la realidad y la verdadera importancia de la disrupción climática? ¿Cómo estamos expresando solidaridad para con los pueblos indígenas y marginados que se encuentran afectados por la disrupción climática?*

Prisons Committee's Letter to Governor Cuomo

See minute 2017-04-30, p. 45

Dear Governor Cuomo,

The New York Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) calls on you to withdraw your proposal to drastically cut the number of visiting days at New York State maximum-security prisons. This request is informed by our direct experience with those who are incarcerated and with their families.

It is a guiding truth of our faith as Quakers that there is that of God in everyone and that no person is beyond redemption. In light of this belief, we support programming in correctional facilities in New York State, helping facilitate Alternatives to Violence workshops in fifteen facilities and holding worship groups in eight facilities.

We listen deeply to the lived experience of incarcerated men and women and hear of the critical importance of ongoing connection to their families and loved ones. We hear from people serving long sentences that time spent in the visit room with friends and family is especially important, keeping hope alive and providing a key incentive for positive behavior. We have witnessed how these connections have contributed to the successful reintegration of men and women back into society

We have heard of the devastating effects your proposed cuts will have on the families of the incarcerated. The majority of these families already struggle financially and emotionally to maintain ties with their loved ones. Now they must face the reality that their options for visit days will be limited and the likelihood that their visits will be cut short due to overcrowded visit rooms.

Your proposal would reportedly save \$2.6 million, which represents a fraction of your overall state budget of \$152 billion. We ask you to consider the human cost, particularly to poor communities and communities of color, and urge you to withdraw your plan.

Report on Alternatives to Violence Project in El Salvador

See minute 2017-04-31, p. 45

February 14–March 7, 2017

Shirley Way (Ithaca MM) and Fazilee Buechel (has attended Ithaca MM)

This was my (Shirley) third trip in four years to El Salvador to help facilitate AVP workshops and Fazilee's second. Shirley Way and Mara Komoska (Brooklyn MM) went for two weeks in 2014 and Fazilee and Shirley went for three weeks last year and again this year.

The trip in 2014 and this one in 2017 were funded almost entirely by NYYM's Sharing Fund. Please support this and other great Spirit-led witness work by making a donation to the Sharing Fund. Thank you!

My clearness turned care and accountability committee can tell you that in discerning around the trip this year, I was clearly called to continue the work—I could not not go. I have built relationship with the team and know the power of the work that flows through me and the team.

And my clearness committee can tell you that I really was not keen on going. There was a fear and a dread that I've not experienced before. It stemmed from witnessing the effects of gang violence on the people and knowing that we were not safe last year. A newspaper headline last year was, "Only twenty-one killed yesterday in the country".

And I knew that I could not not go.

Thankfully, the social climate is much improved this year. People openly smile and laugh and greet one another on the street. Gang violence has lessened, we were told, because gang leaders are either imprisoned or have been killed.

So holding workshops was easier this year than last. People were not as afraid to attend.

Salomon Medina coordinates AVP in El Salvador, working for Friends Peace Teams' Peacebuilding en Las Americas (PLA). His friend of more than thirty years, Mario Gonzalez, is a newly trained AVP facilitator. Mario is a pastor with an evangelical Christian church in San Salvador. The four of us—Salomon,

Mario, Fazilee and me (Shirley)—were the facilitation team for the four workshops.

This work is the most meaningful I have ever experienced and I speak for the team in conveying my gratitude to NYYM for funding it.

We started by returning to a small village close to the Honduran border—Santa Marta. Mara, Salomon and I had held a Basic and an Advanced with the people of this village and neighboring San Felipe in 2014.

This time we held an Advanced Special Topic Workshop on Trauma Resilience.

The participants are part of the organization founded by Oscar Romero called Co-Madres. Family members of the Co-Madres were disappeared during El Salvador's civil war in the 1980's and this community fled to Honduras for seven years. The Salvadoran army fired on them from helicopters as they crossed the river to Honduras. When they returned, their land had been taken by neighbors. They still are fighting to get it back. Without land, people cannot grow enough crops to feed their families. But they are not starving and it is not entirely clear to me how they sustain themselves.

The workshop scene here is always a bit chaotic. Many participated for two days but only nine completed all three days. Only a few participants could read and write. Dogs, children, elderly who could not participate much were all in the mix and were welcomed by all. Domestic violence, sexual violence, alcoholism, machismo, mothers whose sons had opted to or were coerced into joining gangs, unemployment and lack of potable water are issues that are alive for them. (The stream that runs through the village has gone dry.) There were a lot of tears and a lot of laughter. This is a community that knows and loves each other and the workshop was a place to process old and new traumas.

Our second workshop was another on Trauma Resilience, this time with Co-Madres in San Salvador. Several participants were forced to flee their homes during the war, all had lost family members. One man joined the guerrilla forces when he was fifteen. His older brother had been killed. He fled the country and when he returned he was captured by the army and tortured. Now, more than thirty years later, he has increasing

debility in his legs but worse, he has not recovered from the trauma. He distrusts nearly everyone. He has had three families but cannot sustain relationship. He still needs to isolate himself from others and avoid seeing army soldiers on the street. All of the participants recognize the healing effects of AVP and it's clear that people need on-going support in order to fully recover.

Our third workshop was a Basic with a new group of Co-Madres. Last year we held a Training for Facilitators Workshop with some of the Co-Madres and two from that group joined our team for this workshop. But when you are homeless or have nightmares of the army so severe you cannot sleep for more than a few hours at a time and you have difficulty reading, facilitating is a challenge. They ask for your prayers. One participant was likely a guerilla fighter during the war. The army cut off one of her breasts. I'm sure whatever else they did was unspeakable. She now lives with her husband in a part of San Salvador so heavily controlled by gangs that only those who live there are free to come and go. This group was also very fluid and only three were present all three days.

Our fourth and last workshop was a Training for Facilitators with nine participants. All completed all three days and all have potential to be strong facilitators. One participant is just 13 years old! Most of the graduates are congregants of Mario's church, including his wife Mimi who is a co-pastor. Another graduate is a Roman Catholic nun from Ireland who works with gang members inside a prison in San Salvador. Salomon and Mario hope to bring AVP inside the walls with Angela.

Salomon, Mario, Fazilee and I and all of the participants are so grateful for NYYM's support of this work. We have been sustained by your prayers and your love and your money. The work was funded through NYYM's World Ministries (\$1,500) and Witness Activities (\$1,100) grants with an additional \$300 coming from Ithaca MM. Thank You!!!

This work is coordinated through Friends Peace Teams' Peacebuilding en Las Americas. The organization also coordinates AVP work in Guatemala, Honduras and Colombia. Really great work is happening in all of those countries. For more: www.pla.friendspeacetams.org

Minute of Exercise

See minute 2017-04-37, p.48

For over a year, NYYM has been laboring with concerns being raised about the integrity of our supporting Friends United Meeting, given the discriminatory nature of the sexual ethics portion of the organization's personnel policy. During the past year, the Nurture Coordinating Committee has twice asked monthly meetings from across the yearly meeting to weigh in on this issue. About a third of the meetings and worship groups have responded. From these responses, and times of discussion and discernment by NCC, we can name places where we sense unity, and places where we as yet do not have unity.

Places where we have unity:

- We joyfully affirm that each and every person is equally loved and cherished by the Divine, equally worthy of love, respect, and equal treatment, and that the gifts which God bestows upon a community are equally distributed to all for the benefit of the community regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, race, class, or any other distinction.
- We find the Friends United Meeting sexual ethics portion of its personnel policy to be at variance with that knowledge and experience, and therefore discriminatory and unjust.
- We hope for, and advocate for, its revision.
- We are deeply pained to be in the position of financially supporting an organization engaging in injustice and discrimination.
- We seek actions which might be effective in changing this situation.
- We recognize and value the good works that FUM is doing throughout the world.

Places where we do not yet have unity:

- We are not clear as a yearly meeting to disaffiliate from the other yearly meetings that comprise FUM.
- We are not clear as a yearly meeting to withhold financial contributions from FUM as either a matter of conscience, or in protest.

- Some NYYM Friends are aware that the FUM General Board does not have unity on this portion of the personnel policy, either unity to retain it, or to revise or eliminate it. Some are not.
- Some of our meetings see the benefit of withholding funds from the general fund of FUM, while others do not.
- Some of our meetings, as a matter of conscience, are withholding from their covenant donation an amount they deem equivalent to what would go to the FUM general fund. Some are choosing not to.
- In some cases, current withholding of funds to FUM by meetings and individual Friends is a matter of conscience and integrity. In other cases, withholding of funds seems to be for the purpose of trying to exert leverage in this process.
- Some of our meetings would support a more assertive advocacy on this issue by NYYM's representatives to the FUM General Board, while others support the more quiet diplomacy and ministry of presence, which has characterized the stance of board members over the past nine years.

2017 OPERATING BUDGET

EXPENSES

<u>General Services Section</u>	2016 budget	2017 budget	ARCH	Total
Section expense				
General expense & travel	1,000	200		200
NYYM officers' expenses	2,600	2,000		2,000
Audit	24,500	20,000		20,000
Provision for Equalization Fund	–	–		–
Total section expenses	28,100	22,200		22,200
Committees				
Communications Committee	21,500	18,100		18,100
Nominating Committee	200	100		100
Records Committee				
–Contrib to Frds Hist Lib	–	–		–
Sessions Committee	10,000	15,000		15,000
Development Committee	4,500	4,750		4,750
Total committee expenses	36,200	37,950		37,950
Office expense				
Office operations				
Administrative expenses	12,000	13,000	16,933	29,933
Insurance, D&O, liab, prop, umbrella	11,000	11,330		11,330
Rent @ 15th St	22,000	22,000		22,000
Utilities @ 15th St	1,800	1,800		1,800
Staff travel	11,500	13,000		13,000
Computer consultation	500	750		750
Office equipment	1,000	2,200		2,200
Total office operations expenses	59,800	64,080	16,933	81,013
Personnel expenses				
Staff employee salaries	211,184	197,880	84,656	282,536
Staff hourly wages	24,764	67,350		67,350
Salary and wage-related expenses	57,800	54,160	23,901	78,061
Staff development	750	1000		1000
Volunteer support	400	500		500
Total personnel expenses	294,898	320,890	108,557	429,447
Accounting/Bookkeeping services	31,200	36,200		36,200
Total General Services Section	450,198	481,320	125,490	606,810

<u>Ministry Section</u>	2016 budget	2017 budget	ARCH	Total
Section expense	700	700		700
Programs				
From a Place of Abundance	5,800	3,200		3,200
Bible study leader	900	1,000		1,000
Conflict Transformation	600	1,000		1,000
Ministry & Pastoral Care	200	600		600
Pastor's Conference	1,250	1,250		1,250
Spiritual Nurture				
Working Group	5,000	3,250		3,250
Worship at YM Sessions	100	100		100
Parent Meet Up	–	500		500
Task Group on Racism	500	1,000		1,000
Total program expenses	14,350	11,900		11,900
Total Ministry Section	15,050	12,600		12,600

<u>Nurture Section</u>	2016 budget	2017 budget	ARCH	Total
Section expense				
Section expense	1,200	1,200		1,200
NYYM Resource Library	150	–		–
Total Section	1,350	1,200		1,200
Committees				
Aging Concerns	750	750	3,884	4,634
FWCC Committee	–	–		–
Junior Yearly Meeting Planning	1,000	2,200		2,200
Junior Yearly Meeting				
Summer Sessions	16,900	14,500		14,500
Young Adult Concerns	500	2,500		2,500
Young Friends in Residence	–	–		–
Youth Committee	500	750		750
Total committee expenses	19,650	20,700		24,584
Appointees				
FGC Central Committee	1,400	1,400		1,400
FUM Board Representative	6,800	4,200		4,200
Provision, FUM Triennial Sessions	500	550		550
FWCC Section Meetings	3,625	3,000		3,000
Provision for FWCC				
World Gathering	2,000	900		900
Provision for FWCC				
Regional Hosting	–	–		–
Total YM appointees expenses	14,375	10,050		10,050

<u>Nurture Section, cont.</u>	2016 budget	2017 budget	ARCH	Total
Allocations & Donations				
Friends Council on Education	150	150		150
Friends General Conference	2,500	2,500		2,500
Friends United Meeting	2,500	2,500		2,500
FUM—Third World attendance to Triennial	150	150		150
FUM—Third World Board reps	150	150		150
Friends World Committee	1,000	1,000		1,000
FWCC Section of the Americas	150	150		150
Friends LGBTQ Concerns	150	150		150
Oakwood School	—	5,300		5,300
Powell House	66,000	73,200		73,200
Quaker Earthcare Witness	—	—		—
Total allocations & donations	72,750	85,250		85,250
Total Nurture Section	108,125	117,200	3,884	121,084

<u>Witness Section</u>	2016 budget	2017 budget	ARCH	Total
Section				
Section	3,000	3,000		3,000
Coordinating Committee	—	—		—
Total Section	3,000	3,000		3,000
Bolivian Quaker Education Fund	—	—		—
Committees – <i>See Treasurer's Report</i>				
Barrington Dunbar				
Black Concerns				
Indian Affairs				
Peace Concerns				
Prisons				
Right Sharing of World Resources				
William Penn House				
World Ministries				
Total committee expenses	—	—		—
Appointee expenses	—	—		—
Donations	—	—		—
Sharing Fund Campaign	—	—		—
Total Witness Section	3,000	3,000		3,000

Non-categorized	2016 budget	2017 budget	ARCH	Total
Meeting for Discernment	2000	1,000		1,000
Priorities Working Group	500	500		500
Contingency/Future Budget	—	2,000		2,000
Provision for Vital Meetings	—	3,000		3,000
Provision for Next Budget	7,850	500		500
Total Disbursements	586,723	621,120	129,374	750,494

Expenses Consolidation

General Services	450,198	481,320	125,490	606,810
Ministry	15,050	12,600		12,600
Nurture	108,125	117,200	3,884	121,084
Witness	3,000	3,000		3,000
Meeting for Discernment	2,000	1,000		1,000
Priorities Working Group	500	500		500
Contingency	7,850	2,000		2,000
Provision for Vital Meetings		3,000		3,000
Provision for 2017 Budget		500		500
TOTAL EXPENSES	586,723	621,120	129,374	750,494

INCOME

	2016 budget	2017 budget	ARCH	Total
Covenant Donations				
All Friends	42,260	43,620		43,620
Butternuts	4,500	5,211		5,211
Farmington-Scipio	73,500	72,443		72,443
Long Island	48,922	48,315		48,315
New York	78,005	80,851		80,851
Nine Partners	37,180	38,538		38,538
Northeastern	30,370	31,148		31,148
Purchase	68,124	65,565		65,565
Shrewsbury & Plainfield	53,261	53,660		53,660
Covenant subtotal	436,122	439,351		439,351

Revenue – Other Sources

Grant Funds	6,660	32,385	74,000	106,385
Interest Income/etc.	2,000	2,000	11,870	13,870
From Provision for Next Budget	—	13,950		13,950
Annual Appeal	45,000	47,500	11,950	59,450
Total Other Revenue	53,660	95,835	97,820	193,655

NYYM Administered Funds

Contingency	4,287	5,254		5,254
Aging Concerns			27,413	27,413
Advance Lafayette	5,800	3,500		3,500
Meeting Visitation	3,827	2,500		2,500
YFIR	21,563	—		—

NYYM Trustees Admin Fund

Dietrich Fund	—	—	5,000	5,000
Total Funds	35,477	11,254	32,413	43,667

INCOME CONSOLIDATION	2016 budget	2017 budget	ARCH	Totalt
Meeting income	436,122	439,351		439,351
Registration fees	20,000	25,000		25,000
Trustees	40,000	50,000		50,000
Other	53,660	95,835	97,820	193,655
NYYM-Administered Funds	35,477	11,254	32,413	43,667
TOTAL INCOME	585,259	621,440	130,233	751,673
Total revenues	586,759	621,440	130,233	751,673
Total expenses	<u>586,723</u>	<u>621,120</u>	<u>129,374</u>	<u>750,494</u>
Difference	36	320	859	1,179

OPERATING BUDGET 2017 — NOTES

1. A portion of contributions related to FUM, FGC, FWCC, and Oakwood will be considered for funding from funds outside the operating budget.
2. The expenses related to the Sharing Fund Appeal will be funded from the Sharing Fund Endowment Earnings.

TREASURER'S ACCOUNTS

Statement of Operations 1/1/16 to 12/31/16

	2016 Budget	2016 Actual
Disbursements and transfers:		
<u>General Services</u>		
<i>Section expense</i>		
General expense & travel	1,000	259.38
NYYM officer's expense	2,600	817.00
Audit	24,500	2,500.00
Total section expense	28,100	3,576.38
<i>Committees</i>		
Communications	21,500	23,928.47
<i>Handbook</i>		-
Other		1,926.60
<i>Spark</i>		8,086.87
Web site/ <i>Yearbook/Adv Reports</i>		13,915.00
Development Committee	4,500	6,342.69
Nominating	200	-
Records Committee		
Contribution—Friends Historical Library		-
Sessions Committee	10,000	9,802.32
Fall/Spring Sessions		5,659.65
Summer Sessions		4,142.67
Other		-
Total committee expense	36,200	40,073.48
<i>Office expense</i>		
Office operations		
Administrative expenses	12,000	12,504.02
Insurance	11,000	10,879.79
Rent 15th St.	22,000	21,400.00
Utilities 15th St.	1,800	2,000.00
Staff travel	11,500	10,325.89
Computer consultation	500	25.00
Office equipment	1,000	1,437.28

	2016 Budget	2016 Actual
Personnel		
Staff employee salaries	211,184	209,043.37
Hourly staff compensation	24,764	27,382.50
Salary and wage related expenses	57,800	53,838.15
YAFS salary & wage expenses	—	—
Staff development	750	400.00
Volunteer support	400	252.57
Accounting/bookkeeping services	<u>31,200</u>	<u>31,200.00</u>
Total office expense	385,898	380,688.57
Total General Services	450,198	424,338.43
<u>Ministry</u>		
<i>Section expense</i>	700	391.16
Programs		
Advancement Committee	5,800	500.00
Bible study leader Summer Sessions	900	900.00
Conflict Transformation	600	200.00
Ministry & Pastoral Care	200	—
Pastor's conference	1,250	1,179.11
Spiritual Nurture Working Group	5,000	3,888.13
Worship at YM Sessions	100	—
Task Group on Racism	500	524.05
Total program expense	<u>14,350</u>	<u>7,191.29</u>
Total Ministry	15,050	14,350.00
<u>Nurture</u>		
<i>Section expense</i>	1,200	945.99
NYYM Resource Library	150	148.22
Total section expense	1,350	1,094.21
<i>Committees</i>		
Aging Concerns	750	—
FWCC Committee	—	2,057.00
Junior Yearly Meeting	17,900	17,814.90
Planning		3,955.00
Silver Bay		13,859.90
Young Adult Concerns	500	500.00
Young Friends in Residence	—	—
Youth Committee	500	500.00
Total committee expense	19,650	20,871.90

	2016 Budget	2016 Actual
<i>NYYM appointee expense</i>		
FGC Central Committee	1,400	756.75
FUM Board representatives	6,800	6,800.00
Provision for FUM Triennial Sessions	550	550.00
FWCC Section Meetings	3,625	1,546.24
Provision for FWCC World Gathering	2,000	2,000.00
Total NYYM appointee expense	14,375	11,652.99
<i>Allocations and donations</i>		
Friends Council on Education	150	150
Friends General Conference *	2,500	2,500.00
Friends United Meeting **	2,500	2,500.00
FUM 3rd World Attend to Triennial	150	150.00
FUM 3rd World Board reps	150	150.00
Friends World Committee **	1,000	1,000.00
FWCC Section of the Americas	150	150.00
Friends LGBTQ Concerns	150	150.00
Oakwood School *	–	–
Powell House	66,000	66,000.00
Total allocations and donations	<u>72,750</u>	<u>72,750.00</u>
Total Nurture	108,125	106,369.10
<u>Witness</u>		
<i>Section/committee/appointee/admin expense</i>	3,000	3,000
Witness Coordinating Committee donations	–	–
Sharing Fund Campaign Expense ***	–	–
Total Witness	3,000	3,000.00
Meeting for Discernment	2,000	252.00
Priorities Working Group	500	–
Contingency	7,850	–
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS	586,723	541,541.98

* Additional contributions from the Lindley Murray Fund.

** Additional contributions from the Committee on World Ministries.

*** Sharing Fund Campaign Expense to be paid by the Sharing Fund Endowment.

	2016 Budget	2016 Actual
<u>Receipts</u>		
<i>Meetings</i>		
All Friends Regional	42,260	46,160.00
Butternuts Quarterly	4,500	4,861.00
Farmington Regional	73,500	76,933.54
Long Island Quarterly	48,922	48,080.00
New York Quarterly	78,005	74,311.50
Nine Partners Quarterly	37,180	35,371.00
Northeastern Regional	30,370	30,866.50
Purchase Quarterly	68,124	66,320.00
Shrewsbury & Plainfield HY	<u>53,261</u>	<u>49,463.00</u>
Total meeting income	436,122	432,386.54
<i>Other sources</i>		
Registration fees	20,000	27,119.38
Trustees/Endowments	40,000	33,095.70
Young Adult Field Secretary Fund	1,500	-
Annual Appeal ***	45,000	46,832.53
All other	8,660	16,602.89
NYYM Administered Funds****	<u>35,477</u>	<u>21,563.52</u>
Total other sources	150,637	145,214.02
TOTAL RECEIPTS	586,759	577,600.58
Year 2016 Opening Balance***		207,636.90
+ Receipts		577,600.56
- Disbursements		541,541.98
Closing Balance		<u>243,695.48</u>
NET CHANGE		36,058.58

*** 4/11/15 Spring Sessions approval transferring \$11,000 from the Operating Balance to the Annual Appeal Fund.

*** 11/08/15 Fall Sessions approval to transfer \$8,000 from Operating Balance to Annual Appeal Fund and subsequently transferred to the Other Sources Income line

**** 11/08/15 Fall Sessions approval to transfer \$21,563.52 from YFIR Fund Balance to NYYM Administered Funds

FUNDS REPORT (unaudited)

Sharing Fund	Balance as of 1/1/16	Sharing Fd Distribution	Fund Specific	Total Disbursed	Balance as of 12/31/16
	\$ 0.01	\$ 3,425.01	\$ —	\$ 3,425.02	\$ —
AVP Donation	7,970.21	8,859.42	3,472.00	15,304.43	4,997.20
Barrington Dunbar	3,137.92	3,425.02	2,644.62	4,439.59	4,767.97
Friends for Black Concerns	7,573.77	6,328.15	6,189.74	14,288.88	5,802.78
Indian Affairs Committee	5,731.70	—	—	—	5,731.70
Peace Concerns	3,468.97	3,425.02	110.00	5,050.00	1,953.99
Prison Committee	—	2,531.26	75.00	2,606.26	—
Right Sharing of World Resources	9,990.32	6,750.01	300.00	6,376.47	10,663.86
Witness Activities	5,168.21	4,218.77	23,649.65	24,414.92	8,621.71
World Ministries	3,817.84	—	—	—	3,817.84
Conscientious Objection to Paying for War	4,119.49	300.00	—	1,199.49	3,341.87
Working Groups (MMA/Euro/Torture)	1,865.85	—	—	—	1,865.85
NYYM Named Representatives	1,359.70	421.87	75.00	1,538.99	317.58
Quaker Earthcare Witness	1,155.77	2,531.26	—	75.54	3,611.49
Witness to the World	—	—	—	—	—
Sharing Fund Endowment Income	—	—	—	—	—
Total Sharing Fund	55,359.76	42,337.66	36,516.01	78,719.59	55,493.84
General Sharing Fund Income Less Trustee Income		23,134.26			
Sharing Fund Endowment Income		20,768.40			
Total Sharing Fund Income Less Trustee Income		43,902.66			
2014 Sharing Fund Goal		55,000.00			
Percentage of General Sharing Fund Goal		42.06 %			

* excludes Trustee and Endowment income

FUNDS REPORT (unaudited) – cont.

	Balance as of 1/1/16	Transfers from Oper. Budget	Other Income	Total Disbursed	Balance as of 12/31/16
Advancement Committee – Lafayette	8,085.23	–	2,752.00	2,434.00	8,403.23
Advancement Committee – Leach	3,716.37	–	2,122.50	–	5,838.87
Advancement Committee – Women	22.09	–	318.39	159.00	181.48
Equalization Fund	2,582.41	–	12,823.00	14,348.00	1,057.41
Aging Concerns	75,034.45	–	140,043.72	100,001.97	115,076.20
Website	319.48	–	–	–	319.48
<i>Faith and Practice</i> Fund	2,181.38	–	1,529.29	2,757.25	953.42
Sufferings Fund	2,192.68	–	13,126.36	–	15,319.04
FWCC World Gathering	870.33	–	2,000.00	–	2,870.33
FUM Triennial NYM Attendance	1,200.00	–	3,567.62	–	4,767.62
Records Preservation	1,237.39	–	–	–	1,237.39
FWCC Regional Hosting	1,248.44	–	–	–	1,248.44
Meeting Visitation	5,826.76	–	–	–	5,826.76
Youth/Young Adults	1,661.82	–	500.00	–	2,161.82
Young Adult Concerns – Circle of Young Friends	1,894.42	–	1,625.05	1,269.72	2,249.75
Mosher Fund	8,382.70	–	5,431.75	4,891.26	8,923.19
Young Friends in Residence Fund	21,563.52	–	–	21,563.52	–

FUNDS REPORT (unaudited) – cont.

	Balance as of 1/1/16	Transfers from Oper. Budget	Other Income	Total Dispersed	Balance as of 12/31/16
Young Adult Field Secretary	3,239.32	—	—	3,261.89	(22.57)
Fall/Spring Sessions	78.60	—	12,668.71	12,474.31	—
Conflict Transformation Film Project	511.24	—	—	—	511.24
White Privilege Conference	340.00	—	525.00	865.00	—
Vital Meetings	—	—	25,385.00	17,877.60	7,507.40
Annual Appeal Fund	8,365.00	—	19,086.02	18,336.02	9,115.00
Contingency Fund	7,287.36	—	—	1,400.00	5,887.36
Total Yearly Mtg Managed Funds	<u>157,840.99</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>243,504.41</u>	<u>201,912.54</u>	<u>199,432.86</u>
Total Funds	213,200.75	42,337.66	280,020.42	280,632.13	254,926.70

MEETINGS FOR DISCERNMENT

Meetings for Discernment Steering Committee

Meetings for Discernment, held each year during Summer Sessions and in the winter at a host meeting, have become for many in New York Yearly Meeting a valued time for sharing with other Friends in extended worship. In these sessions, we learn what is bubbling up in local meetings, hear inspired ministry from new and experienced Friends and gain renewed appreciation for the variety of gifts among us.

Meetings are organized by a very active and committed Steering Committee, current membership of 8 with three ex-officio members: NYYM clerk, assistant clerk and general secretary. The committee invites local meetings to host the winter Meeting for Discernment as an opportunity for its members to connect deeply with Friends from throughout the yearly meeting. We learn what issues local meetings may be grappling with and are inspired by ministry related to nurturing Friends who are new to our meetings and to worship in the manner of Friends or who are regular participants. We take joy from the realization that in the few years that we have been engaging in this practice, we have learned how to do this well. The committee finds that Friends asked to serve as elders, note takers and clerks during the process express a willingness to serve because the process has shown its spiritual depth and value, both to the participants and to the host meetings.

All local New York Yearly Meeting meetings are invited to appoint representatives to attend Meetings for Discernment on their behalf, which many do, but all Friends are invited to participate. The Steering Committee continues to meet monthly by conference call and hopes to continue its work of providing space for deep worship, listening to Friends' experiences as part of the body of Meetings for Discernment, encouraging participation by an ever widening group of Friends and paying attention to emerging gifts of individual Friends and supporting those gifts, particularly among our younger generations.

The 2017 winter meeting was hosted by Poplar Ridge Monthly Meeting on March 11, and was deeply appreciated by the many Friends who were able to attend.

Jeffrey Aaron, Caroline Lane, co-clerks

MINISTRY SECTION

State of Society Report

No report submitted; report to be approved at Summer Sessions.

Ministry Coordinating Committee

The Ministry Coordinating Committee has met four times since the last annual report. Our meetings were Spirit led and engaging as we sought ways to listen to how we might best respond to the movement of Spirit among us. Our opening meeting during Coordinating Committee weekend was especially rich as Friends responded to the query on the role of Quaker ministry within and outside of Quaker circles in response to the current political tensions. Friends responded with reminders of being peacemakers, traveling in witness and ministry, being a listening presence, sending positive energy into the world, holding a sense of hope, seeking common ground and more. The sharing time was deep and Spirit led.

Much of our focus this past year was on advancement and outreach which took on several new aspects after the Advancement Committee was laid down. The new visions for advancement include the work of the Outreach Working Group, the Alternative Pathways Membership Working Group, a proposed plan to reach out the young adults through social media, and the “Whisper Buddies” project supporting Friends new to Quakerism.

The Outreach Working Group met by conference call with several local monthly meetings sharing their successes and challenges in reaching out to newcomers and finding ways to attract visitors to their meetings. The Alternative Pathways Working Group began exploring different ways for people to join Friends other than joining a local monthly meeting. Ideas on reaching out to young adults through social media were presented and are being supported through an adhoc working group to explore how this might grow. The “Whisper Buddies” project matches seasoned Friends with new Friends at meetings

for business and other occasions when the new Friends may need someone to explain what, why, and how things are happening. Like the other new advancement work this is still in its beginning stages, but it shows great promise in helping to support Friends new to Quaker process to be more engaged and connected.

MCC approved several changes to *Faith and Practice* including approving a new section on the Use of Technology in the Conduct of Business and revising the section on Spiritual Care of Members. We also approved a new *Handbook* page for *Faith and Practice*.

The committee began the process of recording three Friends from across our Yearly Meeting into the ministry. Each Friend has a committee to record which is meeting with them to discern how Spirit is leading them.

This year we addressed the need for support for the Worship at Yearly Meeting Sessions Committee which had lost energy after Ann Davidson's departure. The committee is vital to the spiritual life of our yearly meeting especially during Summer Sessions where they help with vespers, worship sharing groups, elders during sessions, community worship, Bible study, and coffee and conversation. A couple of Friends came forward to serve on the committee, but the committee could still use more members.

Several committees within MCC focused on two of the Priorities that were approved during Summer Sessions 2015: the first priority which states that "We Envision a Yearly Meeting Deeply Grounded in the Practice of our Faith", and the third priority that says that "We Envision a Yearly Meeting Gathered Together into One Body". Both of those Priorities were naturally part of the work of the Spiritual Nurture Working Group, the Committee on Conflict Transformation, and the Worship at Yearly Meeting Sessions Committee each of which worked to deepen Friends understanding of Quaker *Faith and Practice* and bring Friends together in community. Further details of their work can be found in their annual reports. MCC did not focus attention on the Priorities as such but much of the work of its committees addresses these leadings. Perhaps in the future more attention will be actively focused on the Priorities.

In conclusion, the MCC had a rich and productive year. We learned much, listened deeply, shared openly and grew together.

Irma Guthrie, clerk

Advancement Committee

Committee suspended.

Committee on Conflict Transformation

In 2016 the Committee on Conflict Transformation was invited to be of service to monthly meetings and the yearly meeting organization.

The committee has an active core of five members from Farmington-Scipio and Northeastern regional and quarterly meetings, and a co-opted member from Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. In 2016 one member asked to be released from service, another remained on the committee but had other responsibilities that prevented active engagement but did allow holding our work in prayer. We added one member with extensive expertise in restorative justice.

The committee met by phone several times and gathered on retreat January 22-24 and April 22-24, 2016. At the January retreat we oriented new members, engaged the questions around purpose, and reviewed the various pieces of ministry we were carrying. At the April retreat we reviewed the major work we were doing and reflected on what we learned. We considered the possible approaches to our work: education for capacity building and/or response to specific situations. There is tension on the committee around the degree to which we emphasize education and the degree to which we respond to specific situations. At times the tension has been a creative force and at other times less so. At the April retreat we developed a vision: Every meeting shall have the capacity, resources, and confidence to embrace conflict as a tool for spiritual development. We set a goal of holding a series of workshops on different topics that potentially build on each other, but could also be taken as stand-alones.

Members of the committee invested significant effort by phone and in face-to-face meetings in planning for a workshop at the July 2016 FGC Gathering and an October weekend at Powell House. Unfortunately, the FGC workshop was canceled when an experienced member of the team became unavailable. Powell House canceled the October weekend because of low registration. The work remains helpful, as we plan for a workshop at the 2017 FGC Gathering in Niagara Falls.

The committee concluded the process of working through a conflict arising out of 2015 Summer Sessions. We then participated in a series of meetings with individuals from Sessions, Ministry Coordinating Committee and Liaison Committee to develop a coordinated response to conflict arising at NYYM Sessions. At Summer Sessions, the committee was part of a group that met each morning to check in about any arising matters.

In conjunction with the Spiritual Nurture Working Group, a committee member helped facilitate a one-day workshop on growing in community in November 2016. In late 2016 the committee was called upon by a monthly meeting experiencing tensions; assistance began with confidential phone conversations with a number of individuals in preparation for finding how best to respond.

The committee was clear to provide spiritual support for one member for the training on the restorative practice of Peace Circles at Rochester-based PiRI (Partnerships in Restorative Initiatives). We purchased a projector for use in workshops.

The committee submitted its responses to the Accountability Queries to Ministry Coordinating Committee in a timely way.

Heather M. Cook, clerk (Central Finger Lakes)

Ministry and Pastoral Care

The work of this committee continues to focus on the support of pastoral meetings in our yearly meeting. The committee supports the NYYM/NEYM pastors retreat in the Fall and the pastors and elders retreat in the Spring. These retreats provide support and retreat time for the pastors.

This year's pastors and elders retreat was designed as a time

of rest and renewal for pastors and those carrying a concern for the pastoral meetings/pastoral tradition.

The committee continues to administer the Stevens Fund. This year implemented a broader group of recipients eligible to receive funds through the Stevens Fund. We use *Spark*, Info Share, ARCH visitors and word of mouth to inform people of this resource. We continue to work toward efficient and clear administration of this fund.

We seek to support intervisitation amongst Friends as we understand this as ministry that enlivens the ministry of those who are visited and those who visit. We continue to explore ways for this to move forward.

The charge of this committee is broad. This year, we have heard a concern for pastoral care and support of ministry in our yearly meeting. We have added to our numbers and are looking forward to growing the work we do.

We continue to seek members who are interested in the work. We are prayerful and lively in our work. We meet twice a year and as the work requires.

Anne Pomeroy, clerk

Committee to Revise *Faith and Practice*

The Committee to Revise *Faith and Practice* formally met three times during 2016—twice in person and once by telephone. Visitors attended each of its “in person” meetings, which was a welcome sign of interest in the committee’s work. A new clerk was named in July.

The committee initiated the practice of sending to all monthly meeting clerks proposals for revisions that have received a first reading at Sessions. This practice was intended to alert monthly meetings to proposed changes in our Discipline, both to advise members of the issue(s) giving rise to the revision and to prompt broader suggestions for further changes. Upon this change, the committee received comments from monthly meetings each time a proposal was sent out.

The committee agreed that a revised *Handbook* page should be prepared in time for a first reading at Spring Sessions in April 2017. This work was completed in a timely fashion.

The committee also created a web page of its own that can be linked at the main committee page of the NYYM web site. The page features robust information both on the committee's work and outside resources, including links to the Books of Discipline of many other Yearly Meetings.

The committee continued its consideration of a proposed section titled "Seeking the Spirit...In Creation." Ministry was offered on the traditional Quaker sources of this teaching and whether atheist Friends might object to it. The committee presented a version to the Ministry Coordinating Committee for its consideration, accompanied by a proposed quotation from Quaker writing. Ministry Coordinating Committee declined to approve the proposal and returned it to the committee for further work.

The committee presented a revised proposal titled "Use of Technology in the Conduct of Business" to Ministry Coordinating Committee and to the body for first reading at Spring Sessions 2016. (See 2016-17 *Yearbook* at p. 41) At Fall Sessions 2016 the body approved this section, which appears in the online version of *Faith and Practice*.

The body also approved a change to the procedures for revising *Faith and Practice* (see 2016-17 *Yearbook* at pp. 42 and 65) as well as various other changes (pp. 65 and 53).

Modifications to the section on "Covenant Relationships," given a first reading at Spring Sessions 2014, were brought to the committee's attention. The body approved this section at Fall Sessions 2016, and it appears in the online version of *Faith and Practice*.

Also at Fall Sessions 2016, the body heard a first reading of proposed revisions to "Spiritual Care of Members." Pending further comments from the body, it was scheduled for a second reading at Spring Sessions 2017.

The committee has considered, but not acted upon, a query whether *Faith and Practice* should be amended to further clarify the distinction between members and attenders, particularly in matters of corporate decision-making. The committee also discussed whether service on the committee should be restricted to members of the Religious Society of Friends. As an illustration of the perplexity in which the committee is wrestling

in its work, we considered the hypothetical of a bowling team. Should an enthusiastic bowler who conscientiously declines to join a bowling team sit on a committee that determines the rules of the team? On the other hand, might the bowling rules committee benefit from the participation of a person who enthusiastically bowls with a team, but conscientiously declines to wear the team shirt?

The committee's work would be greatly enhanced by the addition of more members.

Spiritual Nurture Working Group

Since Summer Sessions 2016, Spiritual Nurture Working Group has sponsored three retreats at Powell House and will have facilitated eight retreats in local meetings by Summer Sessions 2017. We have provided five Friends with scholarships totaling \$690 to the two Powell House retreats in the current fiscal year (FY) and will have expended \$600 in travel/honoraria to Powell House retreat facilitators. While funding is available in the SNWG budget to support facilitators' travel expenses to local meetings, to date this FY no reimbursement requests have been made. Spiritual Nurture Working Group facilitators are available in all regions of the YM, and will customize retreats to the needs of the meeting. For more information about retreats, see www.nnym.org/content/tending-garden.

Lu Harper & Anne Pomeroy, co-clerks

Committee on Sufferings

The Committee on Sufferings has not been called upon this year.

Committee on Worship at Yearly Meeting Sessions

No report submitted.

GENERAL SERVICES SECTION

General Services Coordinating Committee

Since 2016 Summer Sessions, the Coordinating Committee has met at Fall Sessions, January Coordinating Committee weekend and Spring Sessions. Minutes of our meetings are posted on the NYYM website.

At Fall Sessions in November the Ad Hoc Committee on Staff Structure reported on their work. In January the opening for a general secretary was posted and the Search Committee was established (during Coordinating Committee weekend). Over a dozen applications or inquiries were received by the April 1 deadline. Four interviews were conducted and the Search Committee recommended to Personnel Committee the selection of Steve Mohlke. On May 18 the selection was announced. During Christopher Sammond's last two months of service, Steve will be able to overlap in a consultant role prior to Summer Sessions. Steve's appointment as general secretary will begin at a part time level after Summer Sessions. His full time schedule begins October 1. NYYM's supervisory responsibilities for the general secretary are currently described in the *YM Handbook*, and appropriate revisions are being considered.

The full integration of the ARCH program into the NYYM structure has received attention in several ways this past year, involving several committees and functions within General Services. Last summer it appeared that the ARCH program with full time director would require more financial support than was forthcoming. Although the yearly meeting approved making more funds available from other parts of the General Services budget, the airing of the issue brought forth new donations targeted for ARCH that made the program budget more than balanced by end of the year. At Budget Saturday, October 2016, integrated accounting and combined budget presentations were addressed, and later approved at Fall Sessions. In the 2017 ARCH grant from Friends Foundation for the Aging (FFA) this progress was noted and FFA gave an additional "business and strategic planning" grant of \$10,000. The grant-supported planning work included a retreat at Poughkeepsie Meetinghouse this spring bringing together the ARCH director, Committee on

Aging Concern members and some General Service members. An in-depth report is pending. I have experienced optimism, cooperation, disciplined thinking and loving discernment in advancing this work to support local meetings and individuals dealing with aging.

Several of the committees within General Services Coordinating Committee, and the at-large appointments of the Coordinating Committee itself, are not filled to their intended number of members. The yearly meeting Nominating Committee welcomes suggestions, and I will be happy to answer questions about service on these vital committees.

John Cooley, clerk

Audit Committee

The primary responsibility of the Audit Committee is to assure that audits of NYYM Financial Statements are performed on a regular basis, to respond to audit findings through appropriate bookkeeping adjustments or other measures, and to assure that NYYM processes are in conformance with generally accepted accounting principles. One requirement of generally accepted accounting principles is that there be a single Financial Statement, whereas NYYM had two: The Treasurer's Financial Statement of the Operating Funds, and the Trustees' Financial Report of the Trust Funds. Such a statement was constructed retrospectively from the 2014 Financial Statements during late 2015 and early 2016.

Due to escalating costs, the review/audit of the 2014 Consolidated Financial Statement (CFS) was terminated. The Auditor (PKFOD) identified several technical corrections that were needed in the initial Consolidated Financial Statement, but found no inappropriate financial transactions. The estimated cost to correct the deficiencies (by either the bookkeeper, DSJ, who had produced it, or the auditor) was judged to be more than the likely benefit. The auditor agreed to produce a report, however, based on what was available for review; this was received by November, 2016, after NYYM (Trustees and General Services Committees) produced an acceptable management letter. The letter cited the

known technical issues and corrections with the initial Consolidated Statement, as well as the usual certifications of the accuracy of the input data to the process. This course, of terminating the review, was recommended by the Audit Committee due to the perceived likelihood that additional technical errors (e.g., misclassification of funds) were contained in the then-current CFS draft, and the extreme difficulty of identifying and tracing the source of such errors. In addition, the Trustees had made many changes during the 2014-2016 period that would substantially improve the accuracy and potentially reduce the cost of generating future Consolidated Financial Statements.

Upon consulting among Friends—General Services, Trustees and Financial Services—and in view of the excessive cost of auditing the financial statements produced over this transition period, it was determined that the NYYM Audit Committee should next attempt a review audit of the 2018 Fiscal Year Financial Statement(s). Meanwhile, approximately 11 process issues identified during the preparation for initial review should be corrected. In addition, the number of “funds” (i.e., accounts whose balances carry over from one year to the next) should be reduced, and the accuracy and transparency of the financial statement may be substantially improved. These changes may also reduce future audit/review costs. Accordingly, the Audit Committee has been focused during 2017 on the implementation of process changes, and on the corrections recommended by the auditor relating mainly to the maintenance of, and subsequent release of, restrictions on restricted funds. Additionally, the accounting changes recommended by the auditor for the 2014 CFS are under consideration.

During this period, the Audit Committee itself has been handicapped by the expiration of the term of its clerk, by the re-assignment of one member who became assistant treasurer, and the resignation of another member who had become over-committed. Nevertheless, the committee met at Spring Sessions, and has held about four teleconferences during 2016-2017. The planned delay until the next audit is being well-used to improve the quality of our processes and records to support future audits. Nominating Committee has been active and has identified additional candidates to join the committee.

Tim Johnson, clerk

Communications Committee

The Communications Committee has gone through a transition over the past year. Sarah Way replaced Steve Davison as communications director; a new digital communications director (Chad Gilmartin) was hired in early 2017; a few committee members rotated off the committee; and we began to meet more regularly. We met at Fall Sessions 2016 and Spring Sessions 2017. At both meetings we were fortunate to have the Outreach Working Group in attendance; their work overlaps a bit with ours, and I hope we continue to share information with each other. We also held “open tables” at a meal at each Sessions so Friends could stop by and ask us questions about the new website, ideas for *Spark*, email newsletters, social media, etc.

The committee has helped develop themes for *Spark*, reflecting on what topics were resonating through the yearly meeting: Vocal Ministry; Witness and Faith (inspired by the actions being taken at the Standing Rock camp); The Election and What Comes Next; and the weighty topic and amazing Quaker tool of Discernment. We’ve also been keeping track of the migration to the new website, for which Steve and our new digital communications director Chad have done the bulk of the work.

In the future, I’d like the committee to meet between Sessions, as needed, via video conference.

The Communications Committee needs some new energy and is looking for members with an interest in communications; writers, editors, people with public relations/marketing experience, internet specialists, social media users: we need you! Please contact the Nominating Committee.

Sarah Way, on behalf of the committee

Development Committee

Financial support of NYYM is essential in order to integrate our monthly meetings with each other, and to reinforce our common programs, goals and witness.

In 2016 the committee set a goal of \$45,000 to be generated from fundraising activities. It also was hoped that monthly meetings could modestly raise their covenant donations. We worked together via bi-monthly teleconference to find ways to

plan and to meet our goals.

In late September 2016, Diane Keefe generously opened her Manhattan apartment for a fundraising event with excellent refreshment and featuring speaker Melinda Wenner Bradley, NYYM's children and youth field secretary. This event brought awareness to the need for increased donations, and also publicized the donation link on the NYYM website.

In order to raise additional funds to meet the budgetary goal for 2016, the committee sent a "snail mail" letter to all members in the YM and followed a month later with an emailed appeal, "close the gap," which included a link to click in order to make a direct contribution. It was stressed that "donations of any amount are welcome!" and did have some success.

It was hoped that by Fall Sessions (November 11-13) the "gap" would be closed but that did not happen, so the committee decided to try a merchandising avenue to bring attention to the YM's financial need: embroidered baseball-style caps which said "Quaker" on one side and "Friend" on the other. Hats were given to anyone making a contribution of \$20 or more and, at the same time, those contributors were asked if they would like to sign up for an automatic monthly, semi-annual, or annual contribution. Friends were generous and about half the hats were distributed. Some also were given to Powell House to be "sold" there.

The committee decided that offering these or similar hats would be an on-going method of drawing attention to the need for contributions to the YM, at least through Summer Sessions 2017. We worked hard in 2016 and did manage to raise almost \$38,000. This is short of our goal, but we are very grateful to Friends for their support. The new year began with the challenge of beginning the fund-raising cycle anew.

We are trying to envision more effective and more Spirit centered ways to engage in fundraising. We may try to bring awareness to forms of online donation including recurring donation via the link on the NYYM website homepage.

Conferring with Sessions Committee, we will have a small handout at the Summer Sessions registration table explaining that **"...By connecting our Meetings, we work together to increase awareness of the Inward Light and conscious-**

ness of infinite Divine Love within our Yearly Meeting and throughout the wider world. Financial support enables this calling; allowing our lives to speak through our works as a faith community.”

*Written by members of the Development Committee,
Jerry Leaphart, clerk*

Financial Services Committee

Financial Services Committee met to draft the 2017 budget. The budget is on page 76.

Committee on Expenditure of the H.H. Mosher Fund

In 2016, at our Summer Session at Silver Bay, the book table distributed \$3,579.51 worth of books and CDs from the Friends General Conference bookstore as well as consignment books. This included \$3,132.20 for gifts to 64 monthly meetings, worship groups, and prison worship groups. We also gave gift books to five Friends schools for \$236.97 and ten individuals for \$210.34 (staff, recorded minsters, presenters at NYYM, and first-time visitors).

All those who attend Summer Sessions are invited to visit the book table, located in the lobby at Silver Bay, during the week. Friends may select books to replenish local meeting libraries and up to \$50 worth of books are available to each monthly meeting and worship group. For meetings who do not have a representative at Summer Sessions, someone from a neighboring meeting can be asked to select books. Volunteers make the book table possible and Friends are invited sign up for an hour or two to help arrange and distribute books during Summer Sessions.

Beatrice Beguin, clerk

General Secretary's Report

Overview: I have been writing my advance reports covering a period from mid-May to mid-May each year. As I got clear and strong guidance in mid-March of 2016 that I should resign, and reached clarity with the committee in care of my ministry from my monthly meeting that this was well led in May, my work this past year shifted substantially from my previous work plans. My focus needed to concentrate more on what I could best do or which no one else could do, before I leave. This meant I was able to do much less visitation than previously, and certainly less than I would have liked. Instead, I gave greater focus to the long-term financial health of the yearly meeting organization, working on Development and the Programmatic Interpretation of the Consolidated Budget, as well as some projects in which I had had pivotal involvement, such as the Pay As Led proposal for Summer Sessions and the Monthly Meeting Partner Project.

More Administration: The addition of our new children and youth field secretary, Melinda Wenner Bradley, and the splitting of two existing positions (young adult field secretary and communications director) increased our staff from five to eight, and made for an exponential increase in time devoted to supervision and collaboration. That, combined with training in Melinda Wenner Bradley, supporting her as she got under the weight of the Monthly Meeting Partner Project (MMPP), finalizing the project's initial survey, reporting in writing and in a Philadelphia meeting to that project's grantors, doing yet more with Development than in years previous, laying the groundwork for the programmatic budget, supporting the Personnel Committee through two staff search processes, contributing to the work on the Ad Hoc Committee on Staff Structure, and keeping tabs on the creation of a new website all contributed to much more administrative demands than even the year before.

Visitation: Despite the increased administrative focus, I was able to visit thirteen monthly, quarterly, and regional meetings and worship groups, leading some kind of workshop or program in seven of these visits. Four of those were workshops of a full day or longer. As I have often stated, I dearly love visiting and working with Friends, and it was hard to have to cut back on that part of my work.

Knowing I would be leaving soon, my using visitation to learn about the condition of meetings became less important and I gave priority to visits which had me doing some kind of program. I felt that saying yes to requests to nurture the spiritual lives of individual meetings was still a good intersection of my gifts and the needs of the yearly meeting, even in this hiatus year. So I initiated very few visits; mostly responding to requests and otherwise devoting my time to other work. For meetings in general need I directed other field staff to go do a visit, so that they could learn about as many meetings as possible, and used those opportunities to coach staff on how to do that particular ministry.

Advancement and Outreach: For years I have heard requests from meetings for help in knowing how to do effective advancement and outreach. And, this past year, the yearly meeting's Advancement Committee laid itself down. I still felt advancement and outreach to be a priority, and sought ways in which I could support that work within this yearly meeting. I made a point of attending the NEYM-sponsored outreach gathering at Woolman Hill, to learn what Friends from the six or seven yearly meetings present were doing, and the relative effectiveness of those efforts. I continued to encourage Robin Whitely and Arlene Johnson to create and lead a working group model (rather than a committee model) structuring the work of initiating and supporting outreach in our monthly meetings. I assigned Melinda to supporting this work, and they have simply taken off beyond expectations, with a vibrant group from fifteen monthly meetings forming a learning collaborative in the first year of the working group, experimenting with outreach in their own meetings. I think this is a great learning opportunity, not just about how to better support outreach, but also for potentially restructuring some of the work in our yearly meeting which is best accomplished with a local focus.

Supporting Our Spiritual Nurture: I worked extensively with the Spiritual Nurture Working Group to bring workshops and retreats directly to monthly meetings and to Powell House. Some of the programs I led at monthly meetings were through the SNWG's Tending the Garden program. I also supported three retreats at Powell House as part of the program, facili-

tating From Seed to Flower: Nurturing Tender New Growth, serving as elder at the workshop training Friends in pastoral care, and co-facilitating a facilitators training workshop. The latter was part of a larger effort to broaden the leadership of this vital part of our yearly meeting and to train more facilitators in this ministry. Monthly meetings continue to approach the clerks of the SNWG to ask for seasoned facilitators who can come to their meetings to lead workshops and retreats on topics which nurture the spiritual life of the meeting.

I also served on our Meetings for Discernment Steering Committee, helping to guide the process of bringing sessions of extended worship in a late winter gathering at a monthly meeting as well as at Summer Sessions. This year the steering committee had a retreat to find better grounding in our work and to integrate new members, which was important to our successful work.

And as in years past, I helped plan and facilitate two pastors gatherings with NYYM and NEYM pastors, the spring gathering also being open to all Friends who carry a concern for the pastoral tradition. Some of our pastoral meetings have been struggling, and these retreats have been an important source of support.

Anti-Racism Work: It felt important for me, as someone in a leadership role, to be present at both the White Privilege Conference in Philadelphia, and the Beyond the White Privilege Conference gathering at Powell House six months later. If we are going to be serious about addressing racism in this yearly meeting, I felt being present in a leadership role sent a strong message to those engaged in this work that this is work important to the yearly meeting as a whole. This was a considerable time commitment, but one which was important as this yearly meeting enters more fully into the crucial work of understating the degree to which white privilege and racism are woven into the fabric, not just of the culture at large, but of our extended community as well.

Representing NYYM in the Wider Body of Friends: I spent a lot of time last year representing us in the wider body of Friends. I participated in the FGC Gathering, FUM's Stoking the Fire weekend devoted to empowering ministry, the

FWCC Section of the Americas gathering at Stony Point, and the annual superintendents and secretaries retreat. I also was our sole representative at the historic first meeting of the FUM general board in Cuba. In retrospect, it might have been better if I had cancelled the Cuba trip once I was clear that I would not be continuing in this role. At the time, it seemed too late to do that, and important that someone from NYYM be present at those board meetings and opportunities to build bridges with Cuban Friends. And it was a significant commitment of time.

Development: We have actually managed to keep our operating budget well below the rate of inflation over the past twelve years, while at the same time radically increasing programs which nurture individual Friends and our meetings. This is no small feat. This means that we are actually spending less in real dollars that we were spending in 2004. Our development program is one of the things allowing us to fund our growing edges and at the same time continue supporting programs which are vitally important to different constituencies in our yearly meeting.

For the first part of this last year, the Development Committee did not have a clerk, and I filled in the breach in providing leadership and continuity. Once an able Friend stepped forward, I helped him and the committee with direction and the many logistics of our multi-faceted program. Among many other duties, I helped plan and support the annual fall fundraising dinner, and approached individuals who had both capacity and inclination to support the work of the yearly meeting. I also supported the work of the Quakers and Business group, participating in their first two gatherings.

Paying Attention to the Leadings and Priorities: You will hear implicit in the above a close attention to the various priorities we approved as a body some years ago. In addition to ensuring that my work plan better reflected those priorities, I kept the focus of our staff as a whole on them as well. I also served on the Leadings and Priorities Support Working Group, which sought through day-long and teleconference meetings to find ways to track and encourage our being accountable to the priorities we committed to following.

Wrapping Up: Some of my focus over the last year has

been to do what I can to hand my work off to others, so that my leaving is not a disruption. Some of it has been attending to projects which others would have too complex a learning process to do efficiently. I have not been as able to wrap up everything as neatly and completely as I would like. And, as one Friend reminded me, it's really not possible to do that. Consequently, I'm now in the process of briefing Steve Mohlke, my able successor, on the various pieces he will need to pick up mid-stream. Between that preparation, Steve's substantial abilities, and the support of other staff and volunteers, I anticipate a smooth transition.

Thanks to All: Serving this yearly meeting in this capacity has been the opportunity of a lifetime. I have grown enormously in the process of doing this work, and this service has been a wonderful, consuming challenge and a great joy. Thank you all for your trust, your support, your love, and your caring. It has been an honor and a privilege to serve as your general secretary.

Christopher Sammond, general secretary

Lindley Murray Fund, Trustees

The trustees of the Lindley Murray Fund met in January to consider applications for grants from the fund's proceeds received at the end of 2016. Grants were distributed this spring.

Applications for programs from eleven organizations were received this year. The requests from organizations met one or sometimes several of the mission categories. The category numbers are listed in the table below after the grantee to indicate which fit most accurately (taking into account the archaic language of the original will of Lindley Murray and later trustee interpretations).

Missions:

1. to liberate Black people from slavery and give them, their descendants, and other Black persons suitable education;
2. to promote the civilization and instruction of the Indians of North America;

3. to purchase and distribute books tending to promote piety and virtue and the truth of Christianity;
4. to assist and relieve the poor in any description and in any manner that may be judged proper.

Awards by organization and mission category:

AFSC	1	\$ 2,600
AVP-NY	1, 3	1,700
Amerinda	2	1,800
Creative Response to Conflict	1, 3	1,300
FCNL	2	2,000
FGC	1	4,000
<i>Friends Journal</i>	1, 3, 4	2,995
Oakwood Friends School	1, 3, 4	6,600
Powell House	1, 3, 4	3,000
Redemption Center	1, 4	1,500
YSOP	1, 4	<u>2,000</u>
Total		\$ 29,495

Each year the trustees review the use of the previous year grants. We are occasionally able to visit a program or call to clarify how the grants are being used. Applications for the next cycle of grant awards should be submitted by December 31 to NYYM office by email (office@nyym.org) or letter, to attention of Lindley Murray Fund Trustees clerk.

John Cooley, convener

Nominating Committee

Our message this year, as in previous years: this is rewarding and challenging work and we need more people to join us in doing it.

Elaine Learnard, clerk

Personnel Committee

Hans-Jurgen Lehmann (Ridgewood), clerk of the Personnel Committee since January 2017, reports that the committee has received the resignation of Gabrielle (Gabi) Savory Bailey at

Spring Sessions. The committee is grateful for Gabi's contribution to a revised job description for the young adult field secretary (YAFS), along with our thanks to Christopher Sammond and Emily Provance for their help. We also welcome to the staff of NYYM Sarah Way and Chad Gilmartin who have split between themselves the work of Steve Davison. The committee also welcomes Patricia Glynn as the liaison from ARCH.

It is the committee's understanding that Emily Provance will continue in her young adult field secretary position and help to cover some of the work that was being handled by Gabrielle Savory Bailey. We have had no applications for the job of YAFS, and the thinking goes that we should delay this hiring until our new general secretary is in place. As to the latter, the clerk has participated in the screening committee for the general secretary as well as the interview process which has resulted in Steven Mohlke being put forward as our recommendation. The committee has accepted and endorsed this action. As of this report, no performance appraisals have been received by the committee. A COLA increase of 1.7% has been approved for budget purposes, though how that process went is a bit clouded. We continue to meet as often as possible and have begun the work of revising the NYYM Personnel Handbook.

Respectfully submitted, Hans-Jurgen Lehmann, clerk

YEARLY MEETING STAFF REPORTS

Aging Resources Consultation and Help (ARCH) Staff

"If your meeting is full of old people it isn't thriving."

"We are just going to have to wait until they die before we can change things."

"Our meeting doesn't have enough young people, and we are all overbooked so we can't take on a new initiative."

How often have you heard these kinds of things said by Friends in our yearly meeting? It still surprises me, but I hear Friends say things things like this regularly. And frankly, it hurts to hear them. It speaks to an acceptance of mainstream cultural

assumptions that being old means being inflexible, a burden to others, diminished in our capacity. If we continue to perpetuate and tolerate these stereotypes about the last third of life, we will have no other choice but to live them out.

Mission

According to our NYYM Statement of Leadings and Priorities, that is not what we want. We want vibrant multigenerational meetings that are grounded in worship. And we want the yearly meeting to amplify our counter-cultural message to the world while we are also accountable and transparent. The ARCH program of NYYM engages Friends to reconsider these assumptions about our aging and ourselves, not just for our own benefit, but for the sake of our meeting communities.

We do this by beginning with what we think we know about ourselves: that many of us are in the last third of life. Aging: it's what we do! And we continue by creating opportunities to experience growing older as a blessing, not a burden; as something to look forward to, not to get over with; as a rich opportunity for spiritual growth for ourselves and those around us, not the end of our usefulness.

What We Do

We create 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. We sing a counter-cultural message to each other and to the world around us—that blessings attend our last third of life. In our singing we amplify our commitment to equality and justice.

This year we embark on a new initiative that will help us further our capacity to help foster multigenerational communities and allow us to grow in accountability and transparency: integration with the mission and operations of NYYM. In the 10 years of the ARCH program we have operated as an independent program with the NYYM organization acting as our fiscal agent. At Fall Sessions 2016 the gathered body approved the 2017 budget

including ARCH expenses and revenue in its numbers for the first time. In 2017 the Committee on Aging Concerns, which has been charged with oversight of the ARCH program, initiated a strategic planning process to integrate ARCH's mission, budget, operations, and staff into the mission, budget, operations, and staff of the NYYM. As we continue to serve the individuals and meetings of our yearly meeting, we can bring the same energy and resources we have always brought to our aging concerns to the overall health and vitality of our whole body. We see integration with NYYM as a formalization of the relationships of love, shared commitment, and service we already experience.

Who We Are

The ARCH program staff consists of seven people who work as a geographically distributed team. While I administrate the program and act as a primary contact for care concerns, much of my work is delegation, support, and coordination of our efforts. The rest of our staff bring a broad base of complementary skills and experiences to our team:

Abby Burford – New Jersey

Martha Gurvich – Purchase

Mahayana (Yana) Landowne – New York City

Anita Paul – ARCH specialist

Kathy Slattery – Farmington Scipio

Barbara Spring – North Eastern & Prison Meetings

In New Jersey, Abby is a passionate advocate for the spiritual opportunities of clearing clutter, and for the potential for spiritual healing. In the Eastern Hudson Valley and Connecticut, Martha combines deep experience with our yearly meeting, and its people, with loving accompaniment particularly with end-of-life concerns. In New York City and Long Island, Yana's flair for group facilitation, team building, and social justice create great opportunities for the many visitors in her area to connect and work together. In Farmington Scipio, Kathy adds her ARCH hat to her many hats of ministry that serve the North and Westerly most meetings of our area, with particular experience around grief, trauma, deep listening, and healing.

I'm delighted that the co-founders of the ARCH Program Barbara and Anita are part of our well-rounded team. Anita

remains an on-call walking encyclopedia of aging related information, and a spiritual support to all of us, even as she helps spread the message of ARCH to other Friends organizations beyond our yearly meeting. Barbara returns to our program this year to focus her energy on our collaborative ministry with the Prisons Committee with incarcerated Friends, and to help connect ARCH Visitors in her North Eastern region.

Onward

As we begin the first phase of our integration with the NYYM organization, The ARCH program staff remains grateful to the Committee on Aging Concerns, whose oversight and elder-ship ministry has been our essential link to the NYYM, whose support and advocacy enliven our work, and whose report is on page 131. Please check back with us throughout the year to track the changes we anticipate to our supervisory structure, and our funding plans for the next two and a half years.

Aging concerns concern all of us, not just those of us who are 65+. Just ask anyone from the “sandwich generation” who are juggling nurture and care for both children and parents. For this reason aging with grace and the support of loving and strong meeting communities are integral to the work of our yearly meeting. Your ARCH staff is here to be of service to you and your meeting, and we look forward to hearing from you about how we can meet your needs for supporting your vibrant, multigenerational, grounded meeting!

Callie Janoff, director, for the ARCH Staff

Melinda Wenner Bradley, Children and Youth Field Secretary

As children and youth field secretary I have traveled more than 4000 miles, visited 24 times with Friends in monthly and quarterly meetings and regions, and written (approximately) a bajillion emails. I’ve worshipped with Friends across the yearly meeting, gathered with parents and families to share our joys and challenges, partnered with youth colleagues at Powell House, collaborated with faithful volunteers, supported RE and outreach committees, and been supported by extraordinary col-

leagues on the yearly meeting staff. I've played with kids, met many new friends, and fallen in love with the community that is NYYM.

Two metaphors come to me when describing my work serving the yearly meeting. Being in relationship, and having patience, are required in both images.

The first is a switchboard operator, the kind who listened and connected calls across a big switchboard lighting up in front of her. There is so much Light in our yearly meeting, people and ideas and energy that are serving our monthly meetings, including the families, children, and youth in them. Part of what I feel called to do in this work is find ways to connect you—all of us—with one another and facilitate those relationships and sharing. Here's a beautiful example: I was invited to participate in a conference call with the Outreach Practitioners' Circle, and share ideas for welcoming families. In the course of the conversation, I shared my thoughts on spiritual accompaniment for Friends leading First Day programs, and suggested intentional pairing of religious education and ministry and care committees, to provide pastoral care to Friends who are not in worship because they are with children and youth during that time. A Friend from Albany who was on the call shared that in this same spirit, that meeting writes a minute of travel for their FDS teachers. This wonderful idea will be shared in youth resources on the new NYYM website, and in the August issue of the CYFS e-newsletter. It serves both to support Friends called to serve, and creates a "teachable moment" for our children about Quaker process and practice. I imagine reaching across the switchboard, and plugging in Albany's line with as many others as possible.

The other image is a familiar one for Friends, as we like gardens as metaphor: a sower spreading seed. Many of the tasks I've engaged with in the last year, the first year of this new position serving the yearly meeting, have been planting new ideas and seeing what germinated. As with most planting, some have taken root and we're seeing growth; others are still germinating, and a very few fell on rocky or thorny ground and may not continue to be places for my time and energy. I've tried to sow lavishly, and to nurture what takes root. We're experimenting with the ones that are germinating and growing, and what

they need—how much sun, water, staff time and resources? Reflections on specific projects under the CYFS job description, and a few broader topics that cover CYFS work, follow.

Meeting Visitation:

Travel throughout the yearly meeting, gathering with Friends, sharing worship, fellowship, and learning together, has grounded my work in the last year. I hope to have shared some seeds along the way, too. My travel has taken me to all but two regions of NYYM, and I welcome invitations to visit, bring a program or workshop, or support multigenerational meeting for worship. Thank you for the invitations and hospitality extended this year.

Two specific opportunities this year were grounded in meeting visitation:

Quaker Family Meetups have been hosted in All Friends Regional Meeting, Purchase Quarter, and New York Quarter where a series of four is being supported by NYQM's Ministry and Counsel Committee. While these events have had a range of attendance, in all cases the families who came spoke to their yearning to connect with other Friends who are parenting. The events are low-key and adults share fellowship and worship together while children play under the care of babysitters. I would love to see us host a Quaker Family Meetup in all quarters and regions in the coming year, and we will also be offering an online Quaker Parenting Workshop under the guidance of the Quaker Parenting Initiative and Harriet Heath in the fall of 2017.

Another area for supporting meetings (and Quarters) has been my involvement with Fall and Spring Sessions and planning for children and youth programs. Much care goes into this planning by that session's host committee, and I have tried to be helpful in both program planning and sharing information across the yearly meeting. For Spring Sessions, we experimented with a model of a planning group that would include Friends both in the host quarter and others who have experience and memory of programs past. This synergy of experiences helped to create both a wonderful program for the children (no one attended the equally well planned youth program), and sowed seeds of connection among Friends who had not met—or participated in yearly meeting activities—before. I hope future

Fall and Spring Sessions planners will build on this experience, drawing in more Friends to share their gifts with making spaces for children and youth to participate in the gathering and work of the yearly meeting.

Monthly Meeting Partners Project:

In the first year of the project, we completed work on a yearly meeting survey (“Sharing Our Experiences of Meeting Life in NYYM”), including testing and gathering feedback from Old Chatham Meeting, and discerned from several applications the first two meetings to participate as “partner meetings.” Montclair Meeting and Wilton Meeting have completed the survey, gathered for Listening Sessions, and identified “Partnership Circles” to help shepherd communication and work with NYYM staff. I am grateful to Friends in the partner meetings for their candor and their care of one another. The yearly meeting is now inviting applications for two more meetings to join the Partner Project. This work is about being present to where we are and how we are in relationship with each other in this moment, and with that knowing, seeing where we want to go next and moving toward it together. 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? There have also been many learnings in the first year: the arc of a calendar year in the yearly meeting; time needed to build relationships between meetings and staff; the impact of the November election on Friends priorities and leadings. One possibility that has emerged for me is wondering how to connect the witness and activism of the adult community (in age appropriate ways) with children and youth. Where do these energies in the meeting create openings to experience and participate in Quaker practices and witness? I’m excited for what is ahead with the partner meetings, and grateful for an opportunity to “go deep” with them.

Communication and Collaboration:

These two words encompass many tasks and projects in the CYFS position. I spend time each month answering requests for materials and resources from monthly meetings and individual Friends. (This is very fun, by the way, and is often where

my switchboard operator skills come in handy.) This winter, I launched a new e-newsletter, “The Tote Bag: NYYM Religious Education and Family Resources,” and hope to put out at least four of these in the coming year with features on various topics and news about events and opportunities for youth. I’ve tried to create a presence for children and youth work in issues of *Spark*, and to use InfoShare effectively. In the spring, I was urged to gather and share resources for Black History Month and Women’s History Month, which were made available on the NYYM website and social media. In addition to being an administrator on the NYYM Facebook page, I’ve refreshed the “Families of NYYM” page and created a CYFS Twitter account (@ChildrenYouthFS).

Collaboration with Friends in meetings, fellow staff, and with the Powell House Youth Program directors were vital places for learning and collegial support this year. This included planning and co-facilitating with Chris DeRoller and Mike Clark the Farmington-Scipio Region Youth Institute in March, and the children and youth programs at FSRM’s Spring Gathering. My collaboration with other religious education/youth work colleagues extends to working relationships with NEYM staff (specifically around the Partner Project) and the Quaker Religious Education Collaborative. The latter group has gifted to NYYM free copies of “Quaker Meeting and Me,” a book to support young children learning our practice of worship (there are both programmed and unprogrammed versions), and I will continue to distribute the books at Summer Sessions and in meeting visits.

Committee Support:

In the CYFS role, I serve two other groups in the yearly meeting: the Steering Circle for the Outreach Working Group and the Youth Committee. Serving the OWG has been an opportunity both to support their excellent work and to create connections between those learnings, monthly meeting’s experiences of outreach, and the Partner Project. The Youth Committee is in a time of transition, and it seems appropriate to be reconfiguring its work and role in relationship to a new staff position with care of children and youth work. I convened listening sessions of Youth Committee members and others interested at both

Summer and Fall Sessions in the past year, and two themes have emerged: the possibility for supporting a *community of practice* model among youth workers and religious educators in the yearly meeting, and the hope to include youth voices in this work. At our Summer Sessions, Nurture CC will host a conversation to envision a structure and mission to hold these possibilities.

It's difficult for me to reflect on and write about the last year without recognizing the mourning in my family life that has been almost constant since May 2016. I accepted this position weeks before my mother died, and without any idea that my husband would lose his job. This unforeseen situation led to a decision to move this summer to the house we own in Pennsylvania, to provide our three children with stability in the face of much uncertainty. This change in my circumstances weighs on me every day, and I ask for your prayers and patience. I am clear that serving NYYM as your children and youth field secretary is the work I am called to do, connecting and sowing, and I will continue to serve with joy and gratitude. Christopher and I have begun the work of sorting out the logistics of my doing this work while traveling from my home there instead of from central Long Island. I will absorb my fair portion of that travel cost, and will continue to serve with the same commitment going forward as I have in the past year.

Considering the theme of our Sessions—*Bringing the Peaceable Kingdom to a Turbulent World*—it is not surprising I recently found myself turning to the writing of Elise Boulding, the Quaker sociologist who contributed much to peace and conflict studies as an academic discipline. She also wrote about families and children, and participated in leading First Day programs in her meeting. One of my favorite quotes from Boulding is: *“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 [...]”* (“The Personhood of Children” by Elise Boulding)

In other words, we need to continue to engage in the ways we know—and will discover—to be in multigen-

erational community. That is the exciting, challenging, and Spirit-filled work before us. In the last year, we have participated in multi-age worship together at all three Sessions and also at Farmington-Scipio's Spring Gathering. In each experience, we were challenged in some way by one another, or God, to listen, be patient, and hold that space for everyone. We were held in grace, and often received spoken and unspoken messages from the youngest Friends among us. This is more than a priority of the yearly meeting; it is vital to sustaining our Religious Society.

Walter Naegle, Administrative Associate

The administrative office of NYYM is a friendly, non-competitive, and supportive working environment. I enjoy working in close proximity to Friends Seminary, Stuyvesant Park, and within walking distance of my home.

My primary task is maintaining both the card file and the electronic version of the NYYM database. The active card file consists of members of NYYM, and also individuals and organizations associated with our work. The electronic address list includes monthly meetings, other Quaker organizations, and other yearly meetings. Additional tables in the database include incarcerated individuals who attend our Prison Worship Groups, administrative offices of other yearly meetings (both domestic and international), organizations associated with the work of Friends, and lists of elected officials who we may contact about issues of concern to the Quaker community. The mailing lists for *Spark* and The Sharing Fund appeals are also generated from this information, as well as the global e-mail list for those interested in NYYM news and InfoShare.

I work closely with my supervisor, Helen Garay Toppins, on registrations for Summer, Fall, & Spring Sessions, and Meetings for Discernment. In addition, I help to collect and reproduce materials (agendas, financial reports, epistles, etc.) for distribution at these events.

Together, Helen and I work on NYYM finances, processing payment vouchers, reviewing bank statements, preparing bank deposits and sending out acknowledgements for contributions to the Sharing and Equalization Funds. I work with the general

secretary and Development Committee tracking individual contributions generated by fundraising mailings and events.

I work with other staff on preparing the annual *Yearbook*. This work includes mailing out information sheets to monthly meeting clerks and statistical report forms to recorders, and compiling the information when they are returned.

Routine tasks include answering the telephone, reviewing/responding to e-mail, opening mail, ordering office supplies, mailing *Spark* to monthly meetings, and shipping out copies of *Faith and Practice* and NYYM *Yearbooks*.

Helen Garay Toppins, Associate Secretary

Recently, I had a flashback. I was sitting downstairs in the old New York Yearly Meeting office. Sunlight was streaming through the window and I was working on vouchers. I used to process vouchers on the last Friday afternoon of each month. Yep—one afternoon a month! And that included taking the package to the post office. Of course, that was when I was the solo staff person working for NYYM. It was also when our annual finances were not approaching one million dollars (\$621,440 in Operating; \$254,926 in Funds Held for Others; and \$55,493 in the Sharing Fund). Now, processing vouchers consumes a lot more of my time.

I continue to be an enthusiastic eye witness to our yearly meeting's growth and development. I am especially pleased that I no longer fly solo. This past year, I have had the distinct pleasure of working with a team of fourteen—Gabrielle Savory Bailey, Melinda Wenner Bradley, Steven Davison, Chad Gilmar-tin, Callie Janoff, Walter Naegle, Emily Provance, Christopher Sammond, Sarah Way, four local ARCH coordinators, and myself.

This is a time of transition as we bid a fond farewell to our outgoing general secretary and welcome our incoming general secretary. As the senior staff person I feel that I have an obligation to be especially welcoming to new staff and to assist them in every way possible. This will be one of my priorities as the new general secretary comes on board. In addition, it has been a joy to witness the dedication and depth of the next generation of employees that have already come on board. In my opinion,

they are so ready, willing, and able to take the reins of staffing our yearly meeting.

As our web presence continues to expand, increasing numbers of people are contacting the YM office. Friends, nationally and internationally, in addition to the general public, are finding us through the world wide web, Facebook, and Twitter. We receive a wide range of inquires via calls and emails from across the United States and from around the world. Two young adult Friends from another yearly meeting want to have a Quaker wedding in New York State—who to contact—what to do? A Quaker dies in New York and their non-Quaker South Carolinian family wants to host a memorial meeting in the manner of Friends—who to contact—what to do—how? Quakers flying in from Australia want to find a place to stay in New York City. Quakers flying to Spain want to know where meeting for worship is in Madrid. Someone wants to know who is responsible for cleaning up an abandoned cemetery that once belonged to Quakers. Someone else is looking for their great-great-grandfather's Quaker burial ground. A Friend is moving into the NYYM area wants to find the nearest Quaker meeting, school, and camp. Others want to know where to meet the Quaker contingent for the Women's March. And the beat goes on...

My associate secretary duties are ongoing. I supervise the administrative associate, communications director, and the digital communication director. I support the work of the NYYM treasurer; provide liaison with the accounting service; approve vouchers; execute bank transfers; support the work of the general secretary, officers of the yearly meeting, coordinating committee clerks, committee clerks; review copy for *Spark* and InfoShare; prepare the Committee Section of the *Yearbook*; provide information for seekers; respond to queries from NYYM monthly meeting clerks, members and attenders; and allocate the Equalization Funds. I also serve as the registrar for Summer Sessions, and often as the registrar for Spring and Fall Sessions.

One of the highlights of my year was leading a workshop for ARCH (Aging Resources, Consultation and Help). The topic was Alcohol and Substance Use Disorders among older Americans. I had chosen this concern as one of my social work research projects last semester. I love it when the variant aspects of my

life can come together.

Sarah Way, Communications Director

This report marks the end of my first full year of service as communications director. The former director, Steve Davison, created a comprehensive manual and spent many afternoons, emails, and phone calls helping me learn the ropes, and I am grateful for his training and support. I produced the *Yearbook*, our bimonthly printed (and online) newsletter *Spark*, and our email newsletter InfoShare. I recently switched to using the MailChimp service to send out InfoShare, as it offers better design options and control. I've increased our presence on social media, with a big assist from the other staff members who post frequently on our Facebook page, www.facebook.com/newyorkyearlymeeting. We generally post news and events on Facebook; once the new website is in full swing we'll post news and events there as well. I also Tweet news and links to interesting articles on Quaker thought or social witness at twitter.com/NYYMTweets, and I post images on Instagram, instagram.com/newyorkyearlymeeting/.

Producing *Spark* is possibly my favorite part of this job, as my background is in print design. I started with the September issue, loosely titled Reflections on Summer Sessions, and followed that with a Vocal Ministry issue for which many Friends wrote thoughtful and truth-filled essays. In late November the situation at the protest camps at Standing Rock, North Dakota, became dire, and several Friends from NYYM travelled to stand in solidarity with the Water Protectors who were blocking an extension of the Dakota Access oil pipeline through Native land. Yearly meeting Friends wanted news: what was it like at the camp? Do they need anything? How are our Friends faring? I kept Friends updated by posting frequently on Twitter and Facebook, relaying messages coming into the yearly meeting office from Friends at Standing Rock. I also interviewed Friends who had just returned from Standing Rock, placing those interviews online and in the following issue of *Spark*. That issue, with the theme of Witness and Faith, included many reports and photos from those Friends, among others.

The presidential election result was surprising and dismaying to many Friends. To give space for Friends to be heard, we gave the March issue of *Spark* the theme of The Election and What Comes Next. The recent large protests—including the post-inauguration Women’s March and the People’s Climate March—were well attended by Friends, and I posted many photos from these events in *Spark* and on our Facebook page. The most recent issue of *Spark* had the theme The Powerful Practice of Discernment—as well as all the registration information for Summer Sessions.

To help Friends from across our vast yearly meeting area communicate better, I signed up for video conferencing accounts (on the “Zoom” platform) to be used by yearly meeting committees and staff, training people how to use them and providing tech support as needed. This service has been well utilized for holding committee meetings and information sessions with people across the NYYM area.

I convened Communications Committee meetings at Fall and Spring Sessions, where we also held “open house” tables at a meal so Friends could see the new website, ask questions, and make suggestions. I created the agenda and served as recording clerk for the Communications Committee this past year.

In March I attended a two-day workshop at Union Theological Seminary on branding for religious organizations. This truly helpful seminar inspired the following:

- The yearly meeting should have a unified identity so people can better know who we are, making us more understandable to newcomers and helping Friends know what the yearly meeting organization does and what it offers them. I’m creating a style guide and letterhead, using our new logo, for everyone at the NYYM office to use and follow.
- Friends need more opportunities to share news from the YM and each other. As it is now, I often receive notices in between InfoShare and *Spark* publishing times; I do post these on Facebook, but they deserve more attention. I intend to streamline InfoShare and send it out more frequently in the future.
- The Quaker affinity for insider jargon can create a wall

around us that shuts out seekers and newcomers. Steve was aware of this problem and would always try to use the term “regional meeting” instead of “quarterly meeting,” for example. I intend to continue this and to work with our new digital communications director, Chad Gilmartin, to make sure our materials, including our website, are understandable to as wide an audience as possible.

There’s been other work over the past year—I set up the new communications office so it can be shared by me and Chad Gilmartin; sent out press releases to the media and updated our media contact list; reached out to the social media communications person at NEYM and met with her at Spring Sessions; and designed a brochure for our young adult field secretary and the Year in Review document for the general secretary. In the future, I will continue to ask how I may better serve all members of the yearly meeting community. How do you want to hear from the yearly meeting? How can I help you communicate with each other? Let me know: communications@nyym.org

Young Adult Field Secretary

Position not currently filled.

Records Committee

No report submitted.

Sessions Committee

We love our service to the life of New York Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends! Our work may look like “nuts and bolts”—but we literally create the foundation for our blessed community to gather together and consider the faithful work of our yearly meeting; and we do our work for the youngest person to the oldest, for the smallest worship group to the largest meeting.

Our 2016 Summer Sessions week was held at Silver Bay

Association and a total of 476 people attended, 106 of whom were youth. Once again, we did our best to shape the week-at-a-glance—or as we affectionately call it, the WAAG—to reflect requests and comments from the yearly meeting. But it’s hard to know what to do when one person says, “You don’t need to schedule rest and relaxation, I know when I can rest.” but another person says, “Thank GOD you schedule rest and relaxation or I’d never stop running!” Contradictions abound every year in the evaluations, so we are not ignoring you, really! We are just juggling the nuts and the bolts as best we can.

As you may know, we submitted a report on our on-going alternative site search for Summer Sessions, found online at www.nnym.org/content/minutes-summer-sessions-2016 (look for “Pay As Led”). As luck would have it, our most viable site is also the site for the 2017 FGC Gathering—Niagara University, just outside of Niagara Falls NY. We hope that NYYM members who attend the Gathering will share with Sessions Committee how that venue worked for them and whether or not they think it’s appropriate for us, too. I will personally be able to attend the first three days, so I’ll keep my eyes open for familiar faces, to talk to you about the campus in real time! The site search is also fraught with contradiction and I include below a letter I received last October regarding our meeting at Silver Bay Association. Take a look...

Our 2016 Fall Sessions weekend was hosted by Purchase Quarterly Meeting, where 115 adults and 12 youth gathered at a new venue for us—the Ethical Culture Society—and one that we made work, quite well, I thought, with some creative cooperation from the participants. Our 2017 Spring Sessions weekend was hosted by Long Island Quarterly Meeting, at the very well-known Friends Academy. There were 129 participants for this weekend; 8 youth and 121 adults.

We have taken the evaluation responses from our Spring and Fall regional hosts seriously and hope that our change from Spring Fall Sessions Liaison to Spring Fall Sessions Coordinator & Liaison (SFSC/L) will take much of the burden off of the regions and bring joy back to the work! This person, under the care of Sessions Committee, is now in charge of finding and booking venues, setting up announcements, invitations, session

information, and planning menus—taking care of all the logistics that can be handled via email and phone. The SFSCCL then works with the region on the more specific “on the ground” needs of the youth programs, hospitality, and in-person volunteering. Again, we feel that this upgrade in responsibilities will take a huge burden off of the regions and make hosting a Spring or Fall Sessions much less onerous.

In addition, starting in 2019, our Fall Sessions will be scheduled for the first weekend of November so that we avoid the annual FCNL Meeting with which we are always in conflict.

Please continue to evaluate our efforts and our yearly meeting sessions. We are listening.

Melanie-Claire Mallison, clerk

10/8/2016

To the Members of the Sessions Committee,

We understand that you have been exploring options other than Silver Bay as locations for Summer Sessions of NYYM. We encourage you to instead spend your energies exploring ways that Silver Bay can be made more affordable and accessible to all Friends.

We are writing as members of the worship sharing group for parents with young children, although some of us no longer have small children. Some of us have been meeting for worship-sharing together for 10 years. We have very rich worship that provides substantial spiritual renewal for us. We are all still very much occupied by our parenting responsibilities and some cannot participate in our monthly, quarterly or yearly meeting as much as we might like. NYYM and, specifically, Silver Bay, provide us with important connections to the greater community of Friends.

For us, Silver Bay is a location that cannot be replaced by another. We feel blessed to have this place in our lives, even if only for a week. For some of us, this place has been a yearly part of our lives since we were children, we have grown up here, loved here, courted here, gotten engaged here and brought our children here to continue the circle. Its beauty, access to nature, excellent children’s program and general energy cannot easily be replaced. These things are as important to us as the fact that they have sufficient meeting space and bedrooms.

We make considerable sacrifices to come to Silver Bay each year. We would be unlikely to do so for another location. Silver Bay has value that cannot be calculated. It is a magical place and we in NYYM should commit to continuing to have Summer Sessions here as long as possible.

We are committed, to the degree that we are able, to making donations to the Equalization Fund and will continue to encourage others to donate or avail themselves of this support. We also encourage the Sessions Committee to continue to explore methods to mitigate the economic impact of Summer Sessions, perhaps through a Pay-As-Led method. Another structure we would support is a savings club whereby families or individuals might put money towards their Summer Sessions bill throughout the year.

Thank you, Sessions Committee members, for all your hard work making Summer Sessions possible.

Sincerely,

Jessica Fleischer-Black, Matthew Fleischer-Black, Jason Palmer, Olivia Palmer, Don O'Keefe, Gina Corriero, Sara Niccoli, Megan Byrtus, Caroline Harting, Audrey Jaynes, Kirsten Cole, Julie Glynn, Kara Uleman, Andrew Wolf, Anne Baney, Liz Honis Mallison, Nate Mallison, Matthew Giampoala, Stacey Laughter, Peter Laughter, Elise Bacon, David Keiser-Clark, and Katherine Sorel

Supervisory Committee for the General Secretary

The Supervisory Committee for the General Secretary began 2016 with its customary tasks—reviewing the general secretary's goals for the coming year, gathering accomplishments and comments from the previous year, beginning the process of writing an evaluation. We also set up committee meetings (mostly by teleconference) and monthly calls with the general secretary for support and guidance. These tasks took on a new focus when Christopher Sammond told us in spring that he was being led to leave the position of general secretary at Summer Sessions in 2017. Several members of the committee were drawn into the process of re-visioning the job of general secretary and rethinking the dynamics of the yearly meeting staff, with result-

ing distraction from our assignment to support Christopher. The job of the Supervisory Committee itself also came under scrutiny, with outcome still to be determined. At this point, we are clear that the supervision of the general secretary should be carried out by a smaller, more focused committee, perhaps of only two or three people. We are also clear that it has been a privilege to work with Christopher Sammond. His honesty, directness, and spiritual grounding made our committee work a pleasure, an education, and a challenge of the best kind.

Karen Way, clerk

NYYM Trustees

The yearly meeting's By-Laws provide that "The Trustees shall be responsible for holding title to and administration of the properties, both real and personal, owned by the Corporation, and for the management of bequests and deeds of trust received by the Corporation in a fiduciary capacity." During 2016, Trustees met six times, including a full-day retreat. Our activities included:

- We completed the process of reviewing funds under the care of Trustees to assure that the bequests and trusts are being utilized in the manner intended by the donors and to distribute dividends to the yearly meeting's operating account wherever possible so that allocation decisions can be discerned by the body through the budgeting process.
- We worked with General Services Coordinating Committee and the Audit Committee to address issues relating to the review of the yearly meeting's financial records and operations as of December 31, 2014.
- Trustees oversee real properties owned by the yearly meeting, including former meetinghouses and cemeteries of laid down meetings. We continued to work toward disposing of those properties that are no longer used by Friends.
- We completed the legal process to assume ownership of a former meetinghouse property in Plattekill, New York

(Nine Partners Quarter) from the Huguenot Historical Society and moved forward with disposing of the contents of the building and reselling the property and building to a purchaser who will preserve its historical character. This process was concluded in early 2017 and generated nearly \$25,000 for the benefit of the yearly meeting.

- In connection with managing certain business concerns of the yearly meeting, we dealt with issues relating to insurance coverage, audit expenses, support for the ARCH program, and consolidating and simplifying the yearly meeting's bookkeeping and finances. We also reviewed and refined the Trustees' financial guidelines.
- Trustees began discernment of possible reformation of the manner in which certain yearly meeting financial and business operations are structured or organized. These include the unification of the treasurers of the yearly meeting and of Trustees into a single treasurer, which is being tested during 2016-2017, and transferring the Audit Committee and audit responsibility from General Services Coordinating Committee to the Board of Trustees.
- Minutes of Trustees' meetings, a document describing the trust funds under the care of Trustees and other materials relating to the work of the Trustees were added to the yearly meeting's website as part of our ongoing efforts to enhance transparency and accountability in the yearly meeting's business affairs.

At December 31, 2016, assets under the care of Trustees totaled \$5,484,101, all of which are invested through Friends Fiduciary Corporation. In recent years, FFC has been reducing its dividend or distribution rate. The rate was 4.5% in 2014 and 2015, was further reduced to 4.25% for 2016 and will drop to 4.0% in 2017. All of the realized income from the portfolio is distributed, minus a small charge for collective expenses of managing the assets. The financial report of the Trustees Treasurer as of December 31, 2016 is available on the NYYM website and is set forth below.

Frederick Dettmer, clerk

NYYM Trustee's Report - Dec 31, 2016

	Fund	1H	2H
Regularly Distributed	Value	Distrib	Distrib
NYYM Operating Budget			
<i>Total</i>	\$770,548.54	\$15,035.25	\$15,095.18
Sharing Endowment			
Sharing Endowment	\$530,067.19	\$10,384.20	\$10,384.20
Indian Affairs Committee			
<i>Total</i>	\$118,790.90	\$3,812.58	\$2,327.16
Black Concerns Committee			
<i>Total</i>	\$29,586.00	\$2,065.02	\$579.60
Barrington Dunbar			
<i>Total</i>	\$28,177.15	\$1,965.00	\$552.00
World Ministries Committee			
<i>Total</i>	\$318,753.97	\$6,244.50	\$6,244.50
Committee to Disburse Mosher			
<i>Total</i>	\$92,280.15	\$1,807.80	\$1,807.80
Sufferings Committee			
<i>Total</i>	\$23,156.26	\$12,672.52	\$453.84
Powell House			
<i>Total</i>	\$274,832.84	\$5,384.07	\$5,384.07
Oakwood Scholarship			
<i>Total</i>	\$567,205.96	\$11,111.76	\$11,111.76
Oakwood Administrative			
<i>Total</i>	\$1,093,273.28	\$21,417.60	\$21,417.60
Friends Historical Library			
<i>Total</i>	\$160,976.32	\$3,153.58	\$3,153.58
Manasquan Monthly Meeting			
<i>Total</i>	\$58,714.13	\$1,150.23	\$1,150.23
Aging Concerns Fund			
<i>Total</i>	\$119,189.33	\$2,334.96	\$2,334.96
Nine Partners Quarterly Meeting			
<i>Total</i>	\$42,119.83	\$825.14	\$825.14
Totals	\$4,227,671.85	\$99,364.20	\$82,821.62

	Fund	2016	2016	YE15	YE16
Dividends Retained	Value	Income	Disb	Retained	Retained
Brinkerhoff	\$17,187.99	\$673.44	\$650.00	\$601.41	\$624.85
Agnes Lawrence FUM	\$87,912.70	\$3,444.48	\$5,300.00	\$4,405.03	\$2,549.51
Lindley Murray	\$750,217.59	\$29,394.04	\$30,040.00	\$30,140.81	\$29,494.85
Mahlon York (Butternuts)	\$237,181.13	\$9,292.92	\$11,750.00	\$7,147.42	\$4,690.34
Morris Cemetery	\$14,456.64	\$566.42	\$0.00	\$19,186.32	\$19,752.74
Stevens	\$149,473.56	\$5,856.48	\$17,419.04	\$13,510.82	\$1,948.26
Total Retained Income	\$1,256,429.61	\$49,227.78	\$65,159.04	\$74,991.81	\$59,060.55
Trustee Reserve		\$11,674.51	\$16,547.60	\$51,673.18	\$46,800.05
Report Totals	\$5,484,101.46		\$263,892.46		\$105,860.60

NURTURE SECTION

Nurture Coordinating Committee

Much of this year's focus has, like last year, revolved around work on the minute from Brooklyn Meeting asking New York Yearly Meeting to reconsider its financial support of Friends United Meeting. We worked to gain a sense of the responses from monthly meetings to perhaps redefine our policy. No clear action was discerned, but a Minute of Exercise that lays out where we have agreement and disagreement on the issues was approved by the body at Spring Sessions.

Activity has waned for several committees. We are in a discernment process around the trajectory of the Young Adult Concerns Committee. While they have been inactive this year, NCC has considered ways of supporting young adult Friends on their journeys, and in providing opportunities for service both across our yearly meeting and the around the world. Several of our young adult Friends participated in the FWCC World Gathering last summer.

The Youth Committee has also been inactive. It has the potential for renewed life with the appointment of Melinda Wenner Bradley as the children and youth field secretary. Her travels and engagement throughout the yearly meeting are bringing new life to religious education in our monthly meetings. The NYYM Nominating Committee has been successful in recruiting Friends with leadings to help revitalize this committee.

Currently, the clerk of NCC and Melinda have been structuring a session at Summer Sessions for current and new members of the Youth Committee, and others who feel led to the work. This session should support and move forward the work done in the listening sessions held at Summer and Fall Sessions 2016.

Powell House youth directors organized a trip with several yearly meeting youth to Ireland Junior Yearly Meeting. NCC helped support the trip by covering the costs of the IJYM fee.

Additionally the new directors at Powell House shared with us their vision as the result of a strategic planning process facilitated by Spee Braun. They have introduced creative new programming and shared their energy with our group.

At Spring Sessions our group was unexpectedly led to pay attention to the Pisac minute from FWCC challenging each yearly meeting to create two radical actions around sustainability and the environment. Our committee committed to finding ways to share the queries in this minute with a larger audience through ARCH, the acting young adult field secretary and the children and youth field secretary, weaving the spirit of the minute into further conversations through social media and individual interactions. Five weeks of “Sustainability Saturday” posts went up on the NYYM Facebook page, and then shared with ARCH, NYYM families, and YAF pages, as well as Powell House and Powell House youth groups. Additionally, the YAFS scheduled a video chat on June 5th, 2017 that 4 people participated in.

At each of our sessions we have listened to what CYFS Melinda Wenner Bradley has been learning in her travels across the yearly meeting. Melinda has taken over the responsibility for sorting through the materials in our traveling Resource Library, and sharing them with monthly meetings. At Spring Sessions, she reported that the Monthly Meeting Partnership Project is up and running, with surveys developed and listening sessions begun. The Project will serve to build relationships with and among monthly meetings, inspiring new ideas and activities for educating younger Friends. Two more meetings are expected to join the partnership in the coming year. Regional Parent Meet-Ups have been a highlight of the Project.

The Youth Institute held in Farmington-Scipio Region early this year was a big success. Ideas were generated, and Friends requested religious education resources and ideas for programming. A need for materials and curricula that meet the diversity within meetings was cited.

Overall, this year has been marked by spirit-led work during our time together. Much of this has been deep listening to the needs and pulse of the yearly meeting as a whole, with a particular focus on being informed by the diversity of the membership and the myriad goals and needs that this diversity reflects. We sense a growing strength in the body as we become one, informed by a broad vision of the variety of stages and needs within our section and the yearly meeting. We sense the poten-

tial for Nurture Section committees to become more aware of the gifts they have to help strengthen and revitalize monthly meetings as well as doing their own work. The possibilities are exciting.

Jennifer Perry, clerk, and Deborah Wood, assistant clerk

Committee on Aging Concerns

The Committee on Aging Concerns has seen a productive year of growth and transition. This committee has been responsible for the ARCH (Aging Resources, Consultation and Help) program and the supervision of the skilled ARCH director, Callie Janoff. The ARCH program has grown, and the director is now considered yearly meeting staff. This committee has been very active with an annual two-day retreat held in September 23-24 at Poughkeepsie meetinghouse as well as a two-day strategic planning retreat also at Poughkeepsie May 8-9. We meet at yearly meeting sessions as well as in regular conference calls. The committee size has grown to nine although we are currently listed in the *Handbook* as having 6-8 members with three-year classes. Nine works well, and we have found enough Friends led to serve. There are two in-coming co-clerks (Jill McLellan and Lyle Jenks), and an outgoing clerk (Dare Thompson). CAC representatives regularly attend two coordinating committees, Nurture and General Services. We also have a liaison to the Personnel Committee because the ARCH program has staff.

We currently have a full time director and six other part-time local coordinators. One member of the supervisory committee of three (Dare, Jill, Lyle) meets with Callie usually by phone for an hour or more each week, and monthly, the whole committee. Our actual committee budget is underused because committee members have elected not to be reimbursed. We received a grant from Friends Foundation for the Aging for the strategic and business plan process. We work closely with FFA which is the major funding source for ARCH. Our retreats have been held with the generosity of Friends in Poughkeepsie and committee members who contribute food, hospitality and travel expenses.

Our work includes ARCH programming to monthly meetings, regional meetings, prison meetings, interest groups at sessions,

workshops held at FGC, as well as workshops for those outside the New York Yearly Meeting boundaries. The highlights of the last year include the ARCH director being fully incorporated into yearly meeting staff, the ARCH model being shared with the Friends of the Hickman (Philadelphia YM), and a multi-meeting coalition of Friends in the NYC area meeting regularly in worship to consider Friends meeting the needs of aging related to housing, providing/connecting to services, and building community. The first ARCH visit to an incarcerated Friend occurred in Otisville Prison, and ARCH programs have been presented to the men in the Attica Prison Worship Group and Protestant guests. There are nearly 150 active ARCH visitors now after a recent weekend workshop in the New York region. The local coordinators joined us this fall in our annual retreat, deepening the spirit-led atmosphere.

Our recent retreat led us to the following:

Our Vision

We envision meeting communities whose culture acknowledges and supports both the challenges and blessings of the aging process. We envision a yearly meeting in which older and differently abled persons and caregivers can receive appropriate care within their faith communities and in concert with family, friends, and other resources.

Our Mission

The mission of ARCH is to cultivate meeting communities that effectively support aging and differently abled Friends throughout New York Yearly Meeting.

Our Values

As Friends, we approach our work with open hearts and minds and as an opportunity for spiritual growth for all involved. We acknowledge the mutuality of ministry. We ground our work in worship and adhere to Friends' traditional practices in a way that is accountable and transparent. Working in a spirit of love, respect, honesty, and teamwork, we keep confidences and seek always to honor the commitments we make to one another.

We look forward to the coming year with enthusiasm and love as we integrate fully into New York Yearly Meeting and continue to provide resources to our yearly meeting and occasionally

further afield.

For more information, please see the report from Callie Janoff, ARCH director, on page 108.

Jill McLellan, incoming co-clerk

Epistle Committee

The epistle of the yearly meeting appears in the Yearbook, published in the fall.

Friends General Conference Representatives

People often talk about “going to FGC”, referring to the annual summer Gathering which was jointly hosted this year by NYYM and Canadian YM. Actually, the Gathering is only a small piece of Friends General Conference. The job of our representatives is to attend the annual meeting of Central Committee, the governing board of FGC. Additionally, our representatives serve on subcommittees, such as Committee for Nurturing Ministries Long Range Conference Planning, Finance, and Development.

A lot has been going on at FGC recently. There is an attempt to become more collaborative with the constituent yearly meetings. The Mission Statement and Vision Statement are being reviewed and updated. A recently launched Spiritual Deepening Program offers online opportunities for Friends to explore a variety of topics, both for information and for Spiritual nurture. We are laying groundwork for an institutional assessment to learn where our structure is possibly supporting racism and white privilege—expected to begin this fall. The consulting firm we are hiring will teach staff and volunteers the skills needed to do this work. When the assessment is completed, these skills can be passed on to yearly meetings.

Those are just a few highlights. Check out the website: www.fgcquaker.org to find lots more exciting news, information, and resources.

Karen Snare, clerk

Friends United Meeting Representatives

Friends United Meeting continues its progress in becoming a genuinely global Quaker organization. We have greater and greater participation by East African Friends in the organizational structure, and a noted increase in the sense of agency and empowerment of the East African General Board, particularly in light of their stepping up to raising funds for the overall organization in ways heretofore unheard of, and in FUM calling an East African pastor to head up the new project in Belize.

At the same time, FUM's North American branch has deepened connections with, and participation by, Jamaica and Cuba Yearly Meetings, bringing us into more genuine participation with our Caribbean Friends. We have also been clear to expand our ministry in Belize. FUM had supported a small school in Belize for many years, but more recently felt called to expand the school and to include a church planting, violence prevention work (over 95% of Belizian youth have experienced violence), and outreach to the local community. NYYM has supported AVP work in Belize, and AVP will likely continue to be a mainstay of our work in the community.

FUM reports are now being translated into Spanish, and while visas are difficult, some Cuban Friends have been able to participate in FUM activities in the United States. This past year, the North American General Board traveled to Cuba, so that Cuba Yearly Meeting could fully participate in our board meetings for the first time.

All of these are small, yet significant steps in moving an historically colonialist model service organization into becoming a global partnership. We grapple with issues of vast economic disparity, educational differences, race, unconscious entitlement and privilege, cultural differences, and attachment to old structures and ways of doing things. And we move forward in faith.

Your representatives to the FUM General Board had less of a presence in board meetings this year than in years past. One member was inhibited by health concerns from attending, and another was out of the country for most of the year. I had to place greater priority on attending to the work of this yearly meeting and to wrapping up my work in NYYM. I was able to attend the board meeting in Cuba, and to represent NYYM as

we traveled to all eleven meetings in Oriente Province.

I also participated in North American Ministries Committee (NAM), as we sought to expand that work through a new structure which incorporated Friends who were not superintendents and secretaries of yearly meetings. With a new clerk, and a new structure, some of the work faltered. We had planned on continuing to implement the three strands which the North American Ministries Committee had implemented in the past triennium: a series of workshops designed to draw from several adjacent yearly meetings with topics devoted to building up our meetings and churches; another iteration of the Bridging the Gaps consultation for Friends engaged in the ministry of supporting youth and young adult Friends; and the Stoking the Fire gatherings, a now annual event which nurtures Friends experiencing the movement of the Spirit in their lives, calling them deeper into faithfulness and some form of ministry. Of these three, the first only happened through a workshop on pastoral care training in NYYM, co-sponsored by NEYM and the FUM NAM; the second did not happen at all, and the third is scheduled to coincide with the FUM Triennial in Wichita, KS in July. We had hoped to also add other programs initiating a North American ministry which serves the needs of our constituent monthly meetings and churches. Boggled down, we were not able to initiate any new programs.

Years ago, Friends on NAM could not agree on a common ministry, so while the downturn in the energy and programming during the reorganization is a bit disappointing, it is still a vast improvement over where we were as a functioning organization only a few years ago. The committee will be reformed in the next triennium, and spent its last meeting looking for recommendations for that working body.

Your three board members and three other NYYM Friends are slated to participate in the Triennial at Wichita in July. Gabi Savory Bailey was part of the Triennial Planning Committee, and will be offering, with other Friends, a series of workshops of interest to young adult Friends. I will be offering a workshop on Welcoming the Other, in Ourselves, Our Meetings, and the Wider World.

*On behalf of the NYYM representatives to FUM,
Christopher Sammond, clerk*

Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) Committee

No report submitted.

Junior Yearly Meeting Committee

The charge of the Junior Yearly Meeting Committee (JYM) is to provide Friendly activities for pre-school and school-age children and youth during Summer Sessions. The committee selects and supports the co-coordinators, who, in turn, recruit and support a cadre of volunteers. In 2016, there were 106 babies, children and youth attending Summer Sessions.

The JYM program has two aspects. The first is a morning program, in session from the end of community worship until lunch. The young people are grouped by their school grade and meet in the same space each day. The preschoolers join the Silver Bay children's program, whose staff is supplemented by a Friendly presence. In age-appropriate activities, they experience time with adults and other children in which our Quaker testimonies are lived out. Caring, sharing, cooperation and adults who listen deeply give them an experience that may be quite different from the one they have in their home communities. Many JYM alums speak of JYM as the times (along with the PoHo program) that gave them their sense of identity as Quakers.

The second is afternoon and evening childcare, an informal gathering of the younger children during plenary and committee meeting times. This gives parents an opportunity to attend these meetings. JYM volunteers are assisted by parent volunteers in this program based on a cooperative model.

The senior and junior high groups select two of their number to serve as clerks. These clerks are part of the planning process for the summer sessions and are given an opportunity to develop their leadership skills and learn about Quaker process.

JYM is responsible for three events that include the entire yearly meeting: Fun(d) Fair and Café Night, which are fundraisers in support of Powell House and the Sharing Fund, and the closing program on Friday evening, where each of the groups

presents an epistle, giving a flavor of what they did during their week together.

The JYM committee and volunteers are grateful to the yearly meeting for their continued support. Many of the volunteers are only able to attend and be part of the yearly meeting thanks to the financial support that covers part of their Silver Bay fees.

The co-coordinators of JYM work to fill all position needed to provide a safe, enjoyable, and Friendly program for our youngest Friends, and ask that Friends who have not worked with the children consider giving some time to them. Our children are amazingly wise and insightful. Spending time with them is very rewarding and sure to bring a smile to your face and a warmth to your heart.

Susan Stillman, clerk

Oakwood Friends School

On June 9th, students from around the country and around the world gathered under a beautiful copper beech tree on the Oakwood Friends School campus to celebrate the school's 96th graduation ceremony at its Poughkeepsie home. Each of the 44 graduates, the largest class in twenty years, was given the opportunity to share words of gratitude, words of hope and words of optimism. The students spoke powerfully about what they have gained academically, socially and spiritually. Through their words, spoken at times in multiple different languages, they expressed deep gratitude for the opportunity a Quaker education affords.

Throughout the year, the graduates engaged with faculty, their peers and community members in dialog on social justice, equality, identity, faith, acceptance, gender and inclusion. They have improved their campus, they have shaped policy on the local level and they have facilitated workshops throughout the Hudson Valley. They have engaged in United Nations human rights work both locally and in NYC. As part of a year-long focus on community outreach, the students beautified multiple parks in downtown Poughkeepsie, building benches and planters for public spaces. As part of Oakwood's weekly service learning program, students volunteered at local food pantries, women's

shelters and nursery schools.

The Oakwood community remains committed to efforts to increase sustainability and stewardship, evidenced by both the solar array and a four-season greenhouse. To date, the solar array has generated over 700,000 kWh of electricity, enough to power 65 homes for a year. The greenhouse, using compost from the dining hall, serves as a living classroom for both the middle school and upper school students. Students also extended their gardening efforts into the local community, volunteering time and energy to help local seniors prepare home gardens and clear their lawns. During the summer months a dozen lucky faculty members continue to maintain (and eat) a large variety of fruits, vegetables and herbs from the greenhouse and surrounding gardens.

This year, the Oakwood community drew immense strength in their founding Quaker principles. On any given week over 150 students and 50 faculty and staff gather together for silent worship. Through both weekly reflection and guided discussions, the student body focused on deep listening and respect for voice. This led to actions such as political writing campaigns, attendance at marches and involvement in diversity workshops. A rising senior from the Rosebud Reservation in South Dakota spoke powerfully about the Dakota Access Pipeline while serving on a panel discussion at a local college. Another student organized and ran a program empowering the female voice in her hometown of Kabul, Afghanistan.

At the core of the community is the belief that there is light and voice within each of us. A belief that our differences and our diversity are strengths to be shared, discussed and explored. A respect for the individual, even those we sometimes disagree with, and the ability to listen. Oakwood is part of an educational and spiritual tradition that is much greater than the sum of its parts. It is this connection that helps sustain its mission, helps inform its curriculum and helps ensure that Quaker values remain central to the work of students and faculty every day.

Chad Cianfrani, head of school

Powell House Co-Executive Directors

We've just concluded our first year in this position! It's been a fabulous time, full of experiences and learnings that will enable our work going forward. Of course, we'll continue to have additional opportunities to gain further knowledge about the facility and the folks who come to visit Powell House in the weeks and months ahead. We are always ready to learn more about PoHo as our transition continues.

One of the best things; if not **the** best thing here at Powell House, is working with and connecting to people who recognize—as well as understand—the power of Light and Love and Grace! There is a palpable sense of abundance and compassion that meets and envelops all of those who visit here. Through this Spirit, so much good is accomplished in the wider world, as folks go out from here to positively affect others.

We continue to be focused on working with the Powell House Committee on our strategic planning process in the hopes of equipping Powell House to continue to play a vital role in NYYM's current and future endeavors. Please be sure to read the Powell House Committee report for details of our process, including the working versions of the Powell House mission, vision, and values statements.

Another exciting development at Powell House has been the arrival of Leila Archibald, Manhattan Monthly Meeting, serving as our summer intern. Leila is working in all aspects of the organization—administrative, programing, food service, and maintenance areas. She is a friendly, conscientious and intelligent addition to our staff. Leila will work through July 2017; then she's off for her freshman year at SUNY-Purchase!

Additionally, we'd love to meet with you at your place and your convenience! Just contact us through the Powell House office for our availability to attend your monthly meeting, or quarterly and regional gatherings. We could share on a variety of topics or concerns including, of course, Powell House, as well as environmental issues, bible studies, or small group-building activities.

*Dennis Haag and Regina Baird Haag
Elsie K. Powell House co-executive directors*

Elsie K. Powell House, Inc. Committee

Our Mission: To foster spiritual growth after the manner of Friends and to strengthen the application of Friends' testimonies in the world.

Our Vision: To be the place of heart-felt welcome where all are empowered to live authentically in the world and to recognize truth and call it forth from one another.

Our Values: Friends believe there is that of God in every person. Each of us has the capacity to experience and respond to the movement of Spirit in our lives. We honor the upwelling of Spirit and its expression in one another, including children, the aged and all in between. Grounded by this Spirit, we:

- recognize the dignity of every person
- accept our responsibility to care for the earth and all its inhabitants
- reject violence of any kind
- strive to conduct ourselves with integrity and to focus on what is essential, and
- embrace community through active listening, shared work and joyful connections

In January, the Powell House Committee and staff began a strategic planning process under professional guidance. Thus far we have had input from dozens of individual participants and donors from throughout the yearly meeting, monthly meetings, Friends schools, and other stakeholders. The mission, vision, and values statements above are a part of the process and were approved, as working versions, by the committee during our May 2017 meeting. These statements are rooted in our continuing history as the conference and retreat center of New York Yearly Meeting, with hearts open toward our unfolding future. They are the product of countless hours of work and prayerful consideration at both sub-committee and committee levels, and they will receive further attention in September. We welcome your comments as we continue the process.

We are fortunate to have the opportunity to engage in the vital work of strategic planning during the first year of service of

our new co-executive directors, Regina Baird Haag and Dennis Haag. The completed plan will assist them as they make choices about programming and the use of finite resources—such as staff time and expertise, the buildings and grounds, and financial resources—in order to best fulfill the Powell House mission. Regina and Dennis have entered into this new ministry capably, creatively, and faithfully, and we are grateful for their ability to take on the broad range of tasks the job entails.

Intergenerational conferences such as New Year's, Creativity and Spirituality, and the Fall Work Weekend, continue to attract large numbers of participants. Dwelling Deep, Clerking, and the Retreat for Parents are other examples of conferences which were well attended this year. In the first four months of 2017 the Powell House staff served 308 adults and 48 children through adult programs, the hosting of NYYM committee work, a NYYM/NEYM Pastors Retreat, and a Youth Institute held in the Farmington-Scipio Region by the Powell House Youth Directors and the NYYM children and youth field secretary.

Powell House's youth program continued to provide profoundly important experiences for the 210 young people who participated during the 2017 fiscal year. On average, the youth who participate make time in their busy schedules to attend three conferences at Powell House during the year. The youth directors foster a safe environment for spiritual and social growth. Hearing 4th and 5th graders describe what they do in the silence and then feeling them settle as a group into deep communal waiting was particularly moving for those present at the Getting Started conference in April. Sixth through eighth graders considered what it means to be or need an ally. High school youth and recently graduated young adults spread out to meditate by the pond, tried out Playback Theater, or learned self-care techniques to practice being present with themselves, others, and Spirit. The youth directors also engage with graduates of the program and invite them to continue to be involved with the program by serving as co-facilitators, adult presences, and butlers.

Over the last few years Powell House has developed a connection with Ireland Yearly Meeting. When some of their youth visited Powell House in 2015, they extended an invitation for our

young people to participate in Ireland Junior Yearly Meeting. The NYYM youth who traveled to Ireland this year were struck by the involvement of the Irish youth in planning the sessions and activities throughout the week.

The Powell House Committee anticipated a budget deficit this year due to the unusual expense of compensating both the retiring and newly hired executive directors for their time of overlap during the transition, as well as costs associated with renovating Knoll House for use by the new directors. As the Powell House Committee and staff continue our strategic planning, our focus will be on new or improved ways to serve the yearly meeting and strengthen the application of Friends’ testimonies in the world, while considering appropriate ways to increase revenue from fees and donations to help balance future budgets.

Heidi Kelly, clerk

Powell House Financial Report, 2017

**Statement of Financial Position
As of March 31, 2017 and 2016**

	March 31, 2016 (unaudited)	March 31, 2015 (audited)
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Bank Accounts/Investments	\$ 1,032,679	\$ 1,003,776
Accounts Receivable	(10,278)	413
Other Current Assets	<u>226</u>	<u>51</u>
Total Current Assets	1,022,627	1,004,240
Fixed Assets	<u>1,026,388</u>	<u>940,075</u>
Total Assets	\$ 2,049,015	\$ 1,944,315
LIABILITIES AND EQUITY		
Current Liabilities		
Accounts Payable	\$ 8,882	\$ 20,231
Other Current Liabilities	<u>21,876</u>	<u>20,048</u>
Total Current Liabilities	30,758	40,279
Total Liabilities	30,758	40,279
Total Net Assets	\$ 2,018,257	1,904,036
<u>Total Liabilities & Equity</u>	<u>\$ 2,049,015</u>	<u>\$ 1,944,315</u>

Statement of Activities
For the years ending March 31, 2017 and 2016

	March 31, 2017 (unaudited)	March 31, 2016 (audited)
CASH INCOME		
Contributions	\$ 47,090	\$ 49,528
Guest fees	259,372	301,752
Investment income	86,825	17,257
New York Yearly Meeting	67,800	82,532
Rental income	0	6,600
Other revenue	<u>1,790</u>	<u>1,343</u>
Total income	\$ 462,877	\$ 459,012
 CASH EXPENSES		
Administration & Office Expenses	\$ 34,414	\$ 33,870
Adult & Youth Program Direct Costs	17,868	47,095
Buildings & Grounds	55,497	57,800
Fundraising	542	1,177
Housekeeping & Food	38,328	30,035
Personnel	<u>309,546</u>	<u>313,181</u>
Total Cash Expenses	\$ 456,195	\$ 483,158
NET CASH INCOME	<u>\$ 6,682</u>	<u>(\$ 24,146)</u>
 PLUS NON-CASH INCOME		
Realized/Unrealized Gain on Investments	not yet calculated	(\$ 62,975)
 LESS NON-CASH EXPENSES		
Depreciation	not yet calculated	\$ 37,325
<u>CHANGE IN NET ASSETS</u>	<u>\$ 6,682</u>	<u>(\$ 124,446)</u>

Young Adult Concerns Committee

YACC has found itself in an awkward position for some years now, with peaks and valleys of enthusiasm, energy, activities, and involvement. Following a year when we put on a very successful “First-ever Young Adults Quaker Party,” the committee found itself comprised of one actual young adult and three older members—who by definition are past the age of being Young Adult Friends (YAFs). This is, in part, because it has been hard for Nominating Committee to locate young Friends who are willing to take on a leadership role on the committee. Those of us who are on the committee but older than 35 years, are happy to serve as place-holders for when the next wave of YAFs emerge but we also see several structural issues that are part of our struggle to be a fully committed and active committee:

1. The age grouping is broad, youth just out of high school and in college are in a very different stage of life than those closer to age 35 who may have families, be holding down jobs and moving into their careers.
2. Conferences have been a mainstay of YACC events. These often cause burnout for the committee due to the challenges of organizing and running an on-going offering of ways for widespread YAFs to connect.
3. YAFs often come with the enthusiasm of Powell House, NYYM, and FGC gatherings. These are powerful experiences, and though moving into the life and structures of the adult “side” of Quakerism is often deeply engaging and wonderful, it has a very different and sometimes off-putting flavor.
4. YAFs are dispersed. Within NYYM the group of YAFs in New York City is about the only group that finds it relatively easy to gather, build a non-electronic based community, and support each other in meaningful ways. In addition, most YAFs tend to not have a monthly meeting home base. This almost-requirement of Quakerism is hard to meet in our current world.
5. It may be that the requirements and tools of modern life have evolved so rapidly that we all, including our YAFs, are

flailing in our efforts to be both involved in the life of this world and to hold a coherent communal spiritual practice. A viable YAC Committee really needs the call from YAFs for action, discussion, sharing, learning, practicing, and just being together. There were no audible versions of such a call this year. We have held our wonderful YAF secretary in the light as she has faced personal challenges and we appreciate how Emily Provance has stepped up to help with YACC events during this coming summer's sessions.

*Peace, wisdom, vision and courage—Jens Braun,
for the committee*

Youth Committee

Youth Committee members met at both Summer Sessions and Fall Sessions in 2016 for open meetings that served as listening sessions with others interested in supporting youth work and programs. NYYM staff (the children and youth field secretary) and Powell House youth programs directors participated in these conversations as well. Ideas were recorded and shared with the full committee. The committee is in a time of transition, and Nurture Coordinating Committee is working with the Youth Committee to plan a gathering of interested Friends during this Summer Session to discern a structure and charge for the committee that will best serve to support youth work in the yearly meeting.

Melinda Wenner Bradley, on behalf of the committee

WITNESS SECTION

Witness Coordinating Committee

In 2016, we were challenged to examine ourselves, as individuals and as a yearly meeting, by two major events. The first was the 17th White Privilege Conference, held in Philadelphia in April, and the second was the resistance to the Dakota Access Pipeline throughout the summer and fall. We were challenged to shift our perspective from that of good people working to help others to that of good people learning to hear how our behavior affects and has affected those others to whom we may have felt superior.

In addition to providing financial resources to Friends who attended or were involved in these two events, Witness Coordinating Committee (WCC) supported other work by its constituent committees and some monthly meetings. Though less dramatic than the White Privilege Conference and the Standing Rock Water Protectors, the ongoing work for social justice, for eradicating racism, and for sharing our material wealth with those who have less of it remains the primary focus of our witness.

In the spring of 2015, NYYM agreed to serve as a co-host for the 17th White Privilege Conference (WPC). A task group was formed to facilitate this participation, and in the spring of 2016, more than 100 Friends (20 of them young Friends) from our yearly meeting attended. They joined approximately 400 more Friends from around the country, out of a total conference attendance of 2500. Several Witness committees contributed funds for scholarships, and the Witness Activities Fund of the Sharing Fund helped several monthly meetings provide financial aid for some of their members to attend. Throughout the rest of the year, the Black Concerns and Indian Affairs Committees, and the European American Quakers Working to End Racism Task Group continued the work of awakening our mostly white membership to the realities of white privilege. The Task Group on Hosting the WPC concluded its report with a prayer that summarizes our commitment to change: “As we move into a period in our history where the “them and us” is so pronounced and centering and grounding so essential, may we commit to the hard but essential and healing work of love born of understanding and compassion rather than separation,

ignorance and fear.”

The focus on institutional racism “got real” for the Indian Affairs Committee as news of the resistance of the Standing Rock Sioux in North Dakota to the Dakota Access Pipeline began to reach us during the summer. A number of Friends joined the Water Protectors at times during the summer and fall, and many others supported the resistance through donations, vigils, demonstrations, and a NYYM Delegation who went to Standing Rock for the International Day of Prayer, and the threatened eviction of the Oceti Sakowin camp on December 5th and 6th. Some were there when the Army Corps of Engineers halted construction on the pipeline until the new president took office. With hindsight, we may ask what good this resistance did, since in the end construction of the pipeline continued and the resisters’ camp was bulldozed. The answer must be found in our lives going forward. Have we been changed? Do we see things differently than before?

The work of Witness committees is funded by the Sharing Fund and by some income from legacies left for specific purposes. Only \$3,000 comes from the operating budget of the yearly meeting, and this is intended to cover expenses such as appeal letters and contributions made by the yearly meeting to some outside Quaker organizations. This means that almost all of our corporate witness to our testimonies depends on the generosity of individual Friends. It also means that those who donate to the Sharing Fund are essential partners in all the work done by Witness committees. We are grateful for their support.

In 2016, unfortunately, contributions from individuals and a few monthly meetings added up to only about half the amount the Sharing Fund has typically received in recent years. Since the bulk of our income is always received in November and December, committees usually spend that income in the following year. What this means is that our witness activities in 2016 were not be too seriously affected by the 2016 shortfall, but in 2017 we may be unable to do as much as committee members would like. We ask Friends for their prayers and contributions as we discern how to do as much good work as possible on restricted budgets.

Mary Eagleson, clerk

Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP), Inc.

AVP New York's work in 2016

In 2016, AVP New York held 174 full (18-22 hour) three-day workshops, up from 155 in 2015. While the number of active incarcerated facilitators dropped from 281 in 2015 to 256 in 2016, we grew the number of active outside (civilian) adult facilitators a bit from 77 in 2015 to 80 in 2016. Seven youth facilitators served on-team in 2016.

The number of hours our volunteers put in is impressive. Inside (incarcerated) facilitators volunteered more than 15,750 hours and outside facilitators more than 8,750 hours to hold more than 3,800 in-session workshop hours with 2,369 participants in full (18 hour minimum) workshops and 120 participants in mini (half-day) workshops.

Landing Strips in Brooklyn and Rochester are lively—meeting weekly and monthly respectively. Our new Landing Strip in the Bronx met occasionally in 2016. (In 2017, we are pleased to announce, our Bronx Landing Strip has found more stable footing, meeting weekly!) Landing Strips offer a welcoming hand to people coming home from prison as well as to people in the community who are interested in AVP. Schedules and locations are on the website: www.avpny.org.

Our Work in Prisons

We held 148 full workshops inside sixteen prisons (including one federal prison) with 1,972 participants. Four of those workshops were in Spanish (Sing Sing CF and Bedford Hills CF). One all-facilitator workshop focused on strengthening our facilitation skills. We trained 164 new apprentice facilitators inside the walls.

Our team at our first federal prison in many years—FCI Ray Brook—was honored to learn that AVP has been named a Model Program by the Federal Bureau of Prisons! Congratulations to outside coordinator Steve Bradley and the team at Ray Brook!

Our annual Forum Day was held at Elmira Prison this year and fifteen inside facilitators joined with fourteen outside facilitators from across the state. The Elmira team led us in a fruitful and fun day.

Special topic workshops in prison focused on re-entry, respon-

sibility/accountability, anger, manly awareness, relationships, women of courage, grief, forgiveness, parenting and trauma resilience.

In 2015 we reported that our program at Green Haven Prison had been severely cut in terms of the number of workshops allowed and the number of hours permitted for each workshop. We are pleased to report that in 2016 the administrative staff allowed a few more workshops and our workshop hours have been restored to the full 22-24 in-session hours. We are grateful for outside coordinator Carolyn Polikarpus and the team's patience and persistence in finding ways to work with what was possible.

Our relationship with the New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision continues to be challenging. We acknowledge that we have not adequately trained outside coordinators in that work. We plan to address this going forward. We also understand that following the escape from Clinton Prison in 2015, and the subsequent Inspector General's report that harshly admonishes DOCCS, all staff and volunteers throughout the system are under much closer scrutiny.

In 2015 our outside coordinator at Attica Prison lost her volunteer status with NYS DOCCS due to correspondence with an inside facilitator. We are grateful to DOCCS for not suspending the program at Attica and to Hannah Brown for ably stepping into coordinating there.

In 2016 our outside coordinator at Elmira Prison was suspended by NYS DOCCS for sharing an article about the nationwide prison strike with inside facilitators. Again, we are grateful to DOCCS for not suspending the program and to Kathleen Gale for ably stepping into coordinating.

In 2016 our program at Groveland Prison was suspended by NYS DOCCS. At this writing we are still not clear on the reason for the suspension but we have received encouraging signs from DOCCS that the program will be restored soon.

In 2016 the administration at Eastern Prison confiscated all of the AVP manuals from the inside facilitators and commenced an investigation of our manuals. Subsequently DOCCS Central Office has become involved in the investigation that continues

at this writing.

These challenges have renewed our faith in Transforming Power. We remain open and ready to listen and revise our position, seeking to carry the conversation and the relationship with DOCCS forward, trusting that all involved deeply value AVP and seek ways to make it workable for all.

Our Work in Communities

We held 26 full (18 hour minimum) workshops with 218 adults and 42 youth and trained 26 adult and 13 youth apprentice facilitators. We also held six mini workshops with 50 adults and 25 youth. Two facilitator days provided opportunity for 19 facilitators to hone skills and share new exercises.

Catskill Area Council held a mini workshop that served as team-building for staff of the Delaware County Public Health Services. Three youth facilitators served on-team.

Genesee Valley Area Council held an advanced workshop with seven participants in Rochester. Nadine Hoover led a series of workshops in Alfred. Drawing students from Alfred State College and Alfred University as well as people from the community, eighteen completed both the basic and a special topic on trauma resilience. Nadine and team also held two thirty-hour intensives, the first on practicing peace and the second on practicing conscience, with twelve and eleven participants respectively.

Niagara Frontier Area Council continued their work with youth who are homeless or close to becoming homeless at the Compass House Resource Center in Buffalo. They held a full basic (Level 1) workshop and a ten-hour mini with thirteen youth. The area council also held a basic with four participants at Arcade United Church of Christ and another basic with ten participants, including some seminary students, at Columba-Brigid Roman Catholic Church in Buffalo.

In an experiment with a different schedule for a basic, Fenna Mandolang and Nadine Hoover held one-session monthly Sunday afternoon sessions for two months in 2016, continuing for two more months in 2017 with fourteen participants. The experiment is working well! Participants held a mid-month potluck to discuss the material. Everyone came.

At Osborne Association in the Bronx, T. Haywood led two workshops with young adults. At the Redemption Center in

Brooklyn, Mark Graham led all three levels of workshops, training six new apprentice facilitators.

Central New York Area Council held a mini workshop with 22 (including 12 youth) from Alliance of Communities Transforming Syracuse (ACTS) in Syracuse and a basic in Ithaca with nine participants.

Westchester Area Council held eight full workshops with seventy-two adults and one youth in Purchase, White Plains, Scarsdale, and Yonkers. Two training for facilitators workshops graduated twenty new apprentice facilitators. A mini workshop with twelve American Friends Service Committee interns was held at the Quaker United Nations Office in Manhattan.

Our Work in Schools

Our Catskill Area Council's program at Franklin and Delhi Schools trained thirteen new apprentice facilitators.

At Friends Academy on Long Island, John Scardina coordinated two workshops with middle and high school youth, parents and teachers.

Our Work Outside of NYS

Several AVP/NY facilitators attended the AVP/USA Annual Gathering in Denver, Colorado and Milton Román and Bill Leicht presented an Aiki/AVP mini workshop there.

Through Friends Peace Teams' Peacebuilding en Las Americas, Shirley Way and Fazilee Buechel served on-team with Salomon Medina (PLA's Country Coordinator for AVP in El Salvador) to hold three basic workshops and a training for facilitators workshop in El Salvador. Basic workshop participants were teachers and staff at a Friends school, women from a rural community and parishioners from an evangelical Christian church in San Salvador. The newly trained apprentice facilitators were from the organization Co-Madres—women and men whose loved-ones were disappeared during the civil war. This work feels like just the beginning for both Shirley and Fazilee.

Nadine Hoover continues to coordinate Friends Peace Teams in Asia West Pacific, supporting AVP-Indonesia administratively, and hosting the annual International Peace Training in Pati, Central Java, January 4-10, with participants from the US, Australia, Philippines, West Papua, Sumatra, Java and Nusa

Tenggara Tengah, covering AVP Basic, Trauma Resiliency and Developmental Play. A similar workshop was held in Langkat, North Sumatra, January 16-22. She visited AVP-Aceh, but the program there has waned.

Nadine spent most of the year writing *Creating Cultures of Peace* which describes all the activities on the core special topics that Conscience Studio is using in the Basic Empowerment, Trauma Resiliency, Developmental Play, Liberation from Oppression, Liberty of Conscience and Discernment workshops. She began working on understanding and thinking about discernment as the consensus of conscience, and what implications that has for AVP.

A Call for Facilitators and Support.

We are grateful for our facilitator base and we always need more facilitators to grow AVP in New York State to allow us to reach more communities, schools and prisons here and around the world. Please consider taking the three levels of workshops to become an apprentice facilitator. See www.avpny.org and contact Shirley Way (see below).

We also need financial support. Please also consider making a financial contribution. AVP New York, PO Box 6851, Ithaca, NY 14851-6851, 800-909-8920 or 315-604-7940 or info@avpny.org

Our Gratitude

Many thanks to all who do this work and who make this work possible.

Shirley Way, AVP-NY office administrator

*Alternatives to Violence Project, Inc. (AVP-NY)
Financial Report, 2016*

INCOME

Direct public support

Contributions—individual	\$22,448
Landing Strip contributions	100
Retreat contributions	92
Scholarship	<u>1,000</u>
Total contributions—individual	23,640
Contributions—churches/meetings	2,936

Landing Strip contributions	200
Total contributions—churches/meetings	<u>2,936</u>
Area councils revenue	<u>900.00</u>
<i>Total direct public support</i>	<i>27,676</i>
Indirect public support	
Contributions—NYYM	
Sharing Fund	3,537
Lindley Murray	<u>1,450</u>
<i>Total contributions—NYYM</i>	<i>4,987</i>
Foundation/trust grants	<u> </u>
<i>Total indirect public support</i>	<i>4,987</i>
Program service revenue	
Manual sales	2,550
Annual meeting fees	2,290
Interest—savings/short term inv.	5
Dividends & interest—securities	5,821
Miscellaneous revenue	<u>34</u>
<i>Total program service revenue</i>	<i><u>10,700</u></i>
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 43,362
EXPENSE	
Program services	
Certificates & TP cards	\$1,525
Annual meeting expenses	2,220
Landing Strip—NYC	—
Landing Strip—Rochester	131
Landing Strip—Brooklyn	1,318
Landing Strip—Bronx	107
Manuals	906
Newsletter	2,930
Scholarships	1,158
Volunteer expenses	641
Workshop expenses	126
Payments to affiliates	500
Fundraising expenses	1,616
Promotional materials	336
Retreats (Forum Day)	<u>207</u>
<i>Total program services</i>	<i>\$ 13,720</i>

Management & general expenses	
Payroll expenses	23,378
Payroll service fees	431
Investment fees	—
Supplies	356
Telephone & telecommunications	1,000
Website	1,258
Printing & copying	152
Postage	726
Postmaster	86
Rent	1,650
Travel & meetings expenses	15
Insurance—Liability	923
Insurance—Workman’s Comp	283
NYS Disability Insurance	120
Other expenses	345
Filing fees—NY State	—
	<hr/>
Total management & general expenses	<u>30,722</u>
TOTAL EXPENSE	<u>\$ 44,442</u>
Net ordinary income	<u>\$ (1,079)</u>
Unrealized gain/(loss)	<u>4,466</u>
Net income	<u>\$ 3,387</u>

American Friends Service Committee Northeast Region

The AFSC Northeast Region has programs from Maine to Pennsylvania that focus on Immigrant Rights, Healing Justice, Economic Justice and Peace. All of the regional programs are directly connected to AFSC’s national efforts in support of these issues.

In New York and New Jersey, AFSC programs concentrate on Healing Justice and Immigrant Rights:

Healing Justice

In New York and New Jersey, the Healing Justice and Prison Watch programs empower individuals harmed by criminal justice policies and violence to heal and transform the conditions

under which they live. The programs recognize and advance the worth and dignity of *all* people in and around the criminal legal system. Program staff disseminate information on human rights abuses and healing opportunities; monitor and advocate on behalf of imprisoned individuals and respond to needs of incarcerated people and their families and those harmed by criminal acts; influence individual administrators and policy makers; and provide expertise to coalitions, advocacy groups, community organizations, students, writers, and the media.

AFSC's Prison Watch Program, based in Newark, monitors human rights abuses in US federal and state prisons. In particular, the program promotes national and international attention to the practices of isolation and torture.

This year, Prison Watch developed three new publications: a resource guide for LGBTQ individuals in prison; a report on *Aging in Prison*; and a new regular publication called *From the Inside Out*, which includes testimonies on prison conditions from people in prison in New Jersey. These documents are available at www.afsc.org/new-yorknew-jersey-healing-justice-and-prison-watch/

AFSC's Hope Lives for Lifers Project, based in New York, works with young men, ages 16-24, who are serving long sentences, including those sentenced to life without the possibility of parole. AFSC helps them in their quest for freedom and in their efforts to leave prison stronger and ready to reintegrate into their communities. In 2015, AFSC received funding from Trinity Wall Street to develop materials and begin implementation of the project. On June 9, 2017, Hope Lives for Lifers officially launched as a pilot program at Eastern Correctional Facility in New York State.

This year both Healing Justice programs have provided education and outreach to thousands of individuals on the issues raised by mass incarceration and conditions of confinement, and have provided support and organizing tools to people in prison to help them advocate for themselves. The programs also implement Liberation Summer: Young People's Advocacy Training Camp, that builds leadership skills and offers social justice advocacy training to young people in the New York metropolitan area who have had some experience with the

criminal or immigration legal systems, or who are concerned about those systems and would like to become agents of change. The Healing Justice Program in New York is currently hosting the Stephen Cary Fellow, who is supporting the development of the camp curriculum and working with other youth programs throughout the city.

Immigrant Rights

The overarching goal of the Immigrant Rights Program (IRP) in Newark is to achieve policies that respect the rights and dignity of all immigrants, including a fair and humane national immigration policy. The Immigrant Rights Program's successful integration of legal services, advocacy and organizing has made a dramatic difference in the lives of immigrants in New Jersey and beyond by ensuring that immigrant voices are heard in policy debates, by assisting immigrants with challenging immigration cases, and by changing the narrative about immigration issues to influence policy. AFSC offers legal services to immigrants who are in detention, facing deportation, seeking to reunite with families, or in need of protection. AFSC also organizes in immigrant communities, training emerging leaders and ensuring that those people most affected by immigration policy are advocates for change.

In 2016 and 2017 AFSC's Immigrant Rights Program's expansion of legal representation to a universal representation model has been highly successful, with hundreds of additional clients receiving quality information and representation by AFSC attorneys. The legal services team continues its longstanding work with unaccompanied minors and with the Central American community and people from other parts of the world, providing legal representation in complex immigration cases that lead to family reunification.

At the same time, AFSC works in opposition to immigration detention, organizing campaigns and providing support to individuals whose lives have been impacted by the detention and deportation systems. The recent change in the US government has led to increased arrests, detention and deportation, and AFSC staff are working to provide necessary information to immigrant communities, ensure accurate media coverage, and to share information with the public through presentations,

articles, and online presence.

Intern Program

The New York and Newark offices host an internship program each summer. Through the support of a generous donor we are able to offer stipends to these interns. AFSC also receives interns and volunteers throughout the school year. In the summer of 2017 AFSC is hosting thirteen interns between New York and New Jersey.

Other Regional Work

AFSC's work outside New York and New Jersey includes longstanding work on economic justice, peace, and healing justice. Staff work on trauma healing and reconciliation with Native Americans in Maine, provide opportunities for young people to engage in advocacy and organizing efforts on issues of their choosing, support coalition work in their communities toward social justice, and relate with Quaker meetings on issues of concern.

New Programs

AFSC has hired its first program director for the newly created Social Justice Leadership Institute in Philadelphia. The program director works with the Robert Andrew Stuart Fellow to develop programming that provides leadership and organizing training and opportunities for young people in the Philadelphia area, as well as for AFSC staff who work with youth both in the US and internationally.

Engagement

AFSC staff members are always open to engage with monthly meetings around the many issues we work on. Please feel free to be in touch with the New York office at 212-598-0950 for information and requests.

Amy Gottlieb, associate regional director, northeast region

Barrington Dunbar Fund for Black Development

As a follow-up to the adoption of NYYM's Statement of Leadings and Priorities, the Barrington Dunbar Committee sent an invitation asking all monthly meetings in NYYM to apply for funds.

The response was so successful that we continue to encourage monthly meetings & worship groups to apply for funds.

The Barrington Dunbar Fund for Black Development was established in 1969 as the New York Yearly Meeting's response to the needs of the Black and Puerto Rican communities. The name was changed in 1978 to recognize the work of Barrington Dunbar. In addition, the charge now includes all Latinos in the NYYM area, not just those of Puerto Rican descent.

The Barrington Dunbar Committee is charged with "educating Friends on the needs of the Black and Latino sectors of the community and with stimulating Friends' concern and cooperation in responding to these needs." The committee has granted funds to maintain or expand programs for Black and Latino communities, including development projects that help preschool children, youth, and older adults who are victimized by the adverse conditions of poverty and racism; projects that help with re-entry challenges of formerly incarcerated individuals; scholarships for disadvantaged students at high school and college level; and many other programs of a like nature.

Please send requests to office@nyym.org with Barrington Dunbar in the subject line. Or mail a request letter to: The Barrington Dunbar Committee, c/o New York Yearly Meeting, 15 Rutherford Place, New York, NY 10003.

Helen Garay Toppins, for the committee

Black Concerns Committee

The Friends Committee for Black Concerns' charge from New York Yearly Meeting is ongoing – ***Stimulating the involvement of Friends, as individuals and as members of meetings, in today's racial crisis.*** With each passing day the rhetoric underpinning our current political climate motivates concerned Friends to contact the Black Concerns Committee. This aspect of our committee's work experienced a big boost when we supported our Yearly Meeting's delegation attending the 2016 White Privilege Conference (WPC) which was held in Philadelphia. The conference examined intersectional issues of privilege including: race, gender, sexuality, class, and the implications of being differently-abled. The Black Concerns Commit-

tee provided funds for NYYM's co-sponsorship of the WPC, and provided scholarship assistance for NYYM Friends, including youth scholarships. More than 100 NYYM Friends attended the Philadelphia WPC.

Returning home we faced challenges—how would the Black Concerns Committee assist in implementing the follow-up anti-racism work that is so desperately needed? A desired outcome of the WPC was to offer solutions and team-building strategies to work toward a more equitable world. What solutions would we offer? What strategies? To discern our way forward we solicited responses and suggestions from Quakers who attended the WPC. We also sponsored a Beyond the White Privilege Conference at Powell House in Old Chatham, NY. More conferences, consultations, workshops and meetings will have to take place in order for us to agree on specific anti-racist actions that we would want to suggest to New York Yearly Meeting.

The Black Concerns Committee established the NYYM Racial Justice Network (RJN) and agreed to coordinate its work, as another follow-up to the WPC. We envisioned the network as having at least one Friend from every NYYM monthly meeting and worship group take part. We encourage RJN members to communicate, organize, and disseminate information within their respective areas. Friends also utilize the RJN to inform Friends throughout the yearly meeting about racial justice activities, events, and projects, and to provide information and suggestions for racial justice-related activities. If you would like to be involved with the RJN please contact a member of the Black Concerns Committee.

We continue to provide financial support to NYYM Friends attending anti-racism training, workshops and conferences. This is in keeping with one of the statements in our Leadings and Priorities: "We Envision a Yearly Meeting That Supports and Amplifies Our Witness." We also continue to provide financial support for economically challenged youth of color to attend Summer Sessions and Powell House conferences. And we have purchased and donated anti-racism educational materials to the NYYM Resource Library.

We had to delay our trip to the new National Museum of

African American History and Culture in Washington, DC. So many organizations applied for group tours that we were not permitted to schedule a trip in 2016. We are attempting to organize a field trip for NYYM Friends to visit this museum in 2017.

Helen Garay Toppins, for the committee

Bolivian Quaker Education Fund

The Bolivian Quaker Education Fund (BQEF) had a quiet year, ably running its two main projects, the provision of scholarships and other support to college students, and the boarding home for middle and high school students in Sorata.

Our two main challenges are sustainable fundraising and finding new board members, though we have again this year been frustrated by the refusal of the US embassy to grant travel visas which would allow a visitor from Bolivia to share stories and experiences about our programs.

We delight in how our graduates are making powerful contributions to their communities and society:

- Magaly Quispe, who planted the now-flourishing Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) in the prisons, recently received a grant from the Bolivian government to study the impact of AVP participation on recidivism.
- Emma Condori has founded the Friends International Bilingual Center (FIBC) in La Paz. She and Magaly have worked together to open an early childhood education center in El Alto, the sprawling suburb of La Paz.
- Anahi Ticona is a librarian in the BQE-Bo La Paz office. She also helped establish the new library in the student residence. She has hosted BQEF volunteers and teaches English and Spanish at the FIBC.
- Benito Jallurana, who dreamed the Student Residence into existence, administered it for a few years, and then went on to do AVP, has become actively and successfully involved in getting ethical candidates elected to local office.
- Ruben Hilari has been to several climate change confer-

ences and helped a tree-planting project get off the ground on the windswept Altiplano (high desert). He co-created an Aymara-language wiki, a dictionary, and a Facebook page.

- Alicia Lucasi is now a college professor teaching education courses. She also tutors and counsels the scholarship students in La Paz, and supervises the student residence staff.
- And our latest joy: Ana Callisaya, one of our first scholarship graduates, is now funding a full scholarship for one of this year's students in order to "pay forward" the opportunity she received. Her leadership in being the first graduate to give back in this way is sure to inspire others to follow.

We are grateful for continuing support from the yearly meeting, and for Friends who give generously of their "time, talent, and treasure" to this wonderful project, started in 2002 by Newton Garver.

Jens Braun, NYYM representative to BQEF

Committee on Conscientious Objection to Paying for War (CPOW)

There has been no formal or coordinated actions by the committee during this period other than a number of e-mail exchanges, some submissions of readings on conscience for presentations at yearly meeting gatherings, and helping arrange for Bill Galvin, of the Center on Conscience and War, to speak with JYM Friends this summer. Nevertheless there have been many individual and regional actions COPW by Friends, including arrangements for Malachy Kilbride to give a program in NYC on war tax witness and its new urgencies/opportunities, providing programs and literature in Quaker schools and meetings. Individuals continue to do tax witness, meetings and regions provide accountability, care and support committees. Farmington-Scipio contributed to two workshops on tax resistance and a third was held at Ithaca. The FSRM escrow fund remains available to Friends and at last report had over \$20,000.

Despite the low profile of the COPW Committee, issues of conscience have historically had substantial traction in NYYM

and among Friends generally, and it is clear that a core group in this yearly meeting still hold this witness close.

We recognize that most of us show up for meetings and respond to opportunities to lift up our deep discomfort with participation in war, yet still follow the requirements of the IRS and US authorities that keep us complicit in war. Many of us wrestle with the ways comfort, convenience, and economic security have outweighed our faith in our peace testimony, even as this most recent period of US political life leads us to question the fundamentals of our personal and corporate integrity. We look for a time when the cloud of internal compromise lifts and we risk living into the world towards which the Spirit guides us.

Some of us do experience a great liberty of conscience brought on by letting our inward experience guide our outward forms with confidence and conviction through war tax resistance and public witness. But we all crave the strength of corporate, not just individual, faith and integrity.

COPW affirms NYYM's statement made a decade ago that we have faith in the Living Spirit to bring life, joy peace and prosperity through love, integrity and compassionate justice among people who live in integrity, simplicity and nonviolence. We acknowledge that paying for war violates our religious conviction and commit to testifying to this in our communities. We call on Friends throughout NYYM to join us in experiencing the joy and liberty that comes with integrity. It may be we are gaining in courage to live our convictions.

Nadine Hoover will spend a week with Paul Kim Chappell, a military officer committed to making war illegal, prior to offering the keynote address at NYYM Summer Sessions 2017.

COPW members encourage Friends to:

- Serve on this committee or host materials at Friends gatherings on conscientious objection to paying for war.
- Request counsel to write statements of conscience, consider war tax resistance, look for the seeds of war in our possessions and create cultures of peace.
- Form mutual companion groups to live out our faith by putting beliefs into action.
- Request a workshop for your meeting or community,

especially drawing on National War Tax Resisters Coordinating Committee resources.

- Send letters of conscience and faith to NYYM Office, your congressional representatives, the IRS and your local newspaper (mentioning your representatives by name).
- Serve as a Peace Tax Advocate in your congressional district in collaboration with the National Peace Tax Fund. New York Congressional Districts 7, 10, 12, 14, 15, 16, 20 and 25 support the Peace Tax Fund!

European American Quakers Working to End Racism Working Group

EAQWER, a small but active working group of white anti-racist Friends, spent a fruitful year under the care of Witness Coordinating Committee. We welcomed two new members, Anne Liske (Albany), who had been one of the founding members, but then moved out of the area and now has returned; and Judy Meikle (Wilton). We have liaisons to the Black Concerns Committee, Task Group on Racism, Indian Affairs, Prisons, the new Friends Center for Racial Justice, and of course WCC.

During the year, we held our three annual weekend meetings, where we continued working on personal issues of internalized dominance patterns and white privilege, and considered further witness work.

In the spring we were strongly focused on supporting attendance at the annual White Privilege Conference. Several of our members attended the conference in April, and NYYM sent more than 100 participants, including 11 youth. EAQWER was able to support a few participants with funds. In the process we interacted more closely with WCC, and felt more acceptance from the committee, which had voiced some strong concern when we originally requested to be a working group under its aegis. We also felt it important that whereas in 2009, NYYM almost refused to name white privilege in a minute on racism, this year the YM brought 100 Friends to the White Privilege Conference.

An outcome of our participation in the spring 2015 Pendle Hill conference on mass incarceration was that we revisited responses written in 2012 by the Otisville Worship Group, after their consideration of a draft of the Apology to Afro-Descendants signed by NYYM in November 2013. Members of the Otisville Worship Group proposed eight actions Friends could take to make amends for slavery and its aftermath. We took these actions under discernment, finding we needed to do further research to understand the issues in some cases. We looked into actions already underway, that we can support and publicize. An example is the SAFE (Safe and Fair Evaluations) Parole Act (S.1128/A.4108) which, when passed into law, will make the Parole Board accountable and empower applicants to take concrete action to improve readiness for their parole hearing.

At Summer Sessions, we offered a dialogue project inviting Friends, “Let’s talk about race and racism,” which provided opportunities for informal conversation. We held a well-attended interest group to help plan a November conference at Powell House, “Beyond the White Privilege Conference.” One of our members facilitated the Racial Healing worship sponsored by the Task Group on Racism, and another gave a portion of the final report to the plenary sessions from the WCC White Privilege Conference Task Group.

In August, one of our members co-led the annual Powell House Women’s Weekend, on intersections between racism and sexism. Several other members attended the program.

In the fall, as part of our ongoing education, we began a group read of *Living in the Tension: The Quest for a Spiritualized Racial Justice* by Shelly Tochluk. We named Irma Guthrie as our representative to the new Friends Center for Racial Justice coordinating team.

One of our members helped plan and lead the post-WPC conference at Powell House in November. Others attended and/or were involved in other ways.

Following is the statement we drafted in March 2017 for the NYYM State of the Society report.

The Spiritual State of the EAQWER Working Group

The spiritual state of the EAQWER Working Group is strong and steadfast. Our members feel the work of ending racism is part of our spiritual path. We have faith we will find help as we work.

We benefit from meeting over a weekend three times a year, and taking time to explore with each other how to move this work forward. We have grown into a sense of community with deep connections. Our long check-ins, where we share the joys and challenges in our lives, prepare us to work on a deeper level throughout the weekend.

We feel pain, grief, anger and confusion about what happened to all of humanity as a result of racism. We feel led by Spirit to shine light on the devastation, and on possibilities for change. The more light we shine the more we see.

In the process we are learning to sit with the suffering and oppression we feel and observe as we continue to discern how to live into this work together. When it gets hard, we support each other as we learn, grow and find actions to carry out.

There is ministry to our work and we all feel called by Spirit to move it forward. We have begun taking our ministry to others and others are listening.

The treasurer's report for 2016 is as follows:

Expenditures 2016

Program:

White Privilege Conference scholarships	\$650.00
Powell House Conference scholarships	87.50
Donation to Friends Center for Racial Justice	87.50
<i>Living in the Tension</i> (12 copies)	88.10

Administrative:

Travel, Fall Sessions	<u>\$149.90</u>
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Grand total: \$1063.00

In considering our budget request for 2017, we noted how EAQWER's plans serve the implementation of the Leadings and Priorities:

1. Our work helps fulfill two of the leadings and priorities in particular. With respect to gathering the yearly meeting

into one body, EAQWER is called to support our community to acknowledge racial divisions and to heal them. We work to remove barriers to the full participation and inclusion of Friends of Color. We labor with ourselves and all European American Friends to overcome white privilege and internalized superiority patterns, so we too may be fully gathered into the yearly meeting.

2. Our working group attempts to inform and inspire our community to witness for racial justice. We study the roots of racism and its current manifestations and dynamics. We then design projects and activities to support NYYM to speak out and act against racial oppression.

Robin Alpern, for the working group

Friends Committee on National Legislation Representatives

Many Friends were gathered for FCNL annual meeting and lobby day just after Trump's election. It was good to live in community with Friends at such a challenging moment for many.

We lobbied together for bi-partisan support for sentencing reform, decreasing minimum sentences for non-violent crimes among those imprisoned in the federal system which had gotten significant Republican backing both as an act of forgiveness and a practical money saving idea.

However, what we heard from both New York and Connecticut staffers for the Senate and US House that our delegation visited was that it was not a priority issue for the "lame duck" session before Trump's inauguration. Some Democratic staffers remarked that even though some Republicans in leadership support the policy change (including Paul Ryan) they did not want to "give Obama another victory before he departed". And so we continued to build relationships on the Hill but did not have a victory like the Iran deal this year.

Friends from many monthly meetings in the NY metro area and suburbs filled a large room at the Cornell Club to hear a report from Diane Randall about the Capital Campaign in April 2017 to raise funds for the green renovation of a building that

will house the new Friends in Residence in Washington DC. The Capital Campaign will also fund the growth of the Young Adult Advocacy Corps which gives part time jobs to young organizers continued to build a constituency for Friends priority issues in their home states. I have had the opportunity to meet many of these young people at the Annual Meeting. Many are dynamos. Many were moved by the young “dreamer” from Staten Island who has been in the FCNL Advocacy program working on immigration issues when he described the deportation threats in the community and what young people are doing about it.

I encourage all Friends interested in engaging in political work to contact me and consider joining FCNL for any of its programs throughout the year. Check out the web site at www.fcnl.org. It’s a bee hive of activity.

“Don’t agonize, organize!”—Leading African American attorney and activist Florynce Kennedy

Diane Keefe, clerk, FCNL delegates

Friends Peace Teams Representatives

Friends Peace Teams Asia West Pacific Initiative engages with peace workers in Central Java, North Sumatra, Aceh in Indonesia; Manila, Tagbilaran City, and Davao City in the Philippines; Seoul in Korea; Kathmandu, Pokara and Bhutanese camps in Nepal; and we maintain a concern for peace workers in Palestine, Israel, Afghanistan, Chechnya, Ukraine, New Zealand and Australia. As our peace-work follows the calling of our volunteers, in 2016 we actively worked in Nepal, Indonesia, the Philippines and Korea supporting nonviolence, peace, trauma healing, conflict transformation, and social justice advocacy for communities recovering from war or religious violence.

We completed earthquake relief activities in Nepal. We also provided a grant to Peace Place in Central Java to expand their training center and school. We continue to develop and support pre-schools, after-school programs, and parent, family and teacher training based on peace and nonviolence. The book *The Power of Goodness: Art and Stories for a Culture of Peace* was published and is now available. It is a collection of short stories

from the lives of real people who chose nonviolence and reconciliation and is accompanied by illustrations by young artists.

Peacebuilding en las Américas (PLA) has over ten active peacebuilding and trauma healing programs in Colombia, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras. Peacebuilding en Las Americas (PLA) provides grassroots solidarity, tools and hope to those most discriminated against and marginalized. 2016 marked an important year for the continued sustainability of PLA's programs. After 13 years of volunteer service, founding coordinator Val Liveoak retired, continuing as advisor to the new team: Monica Maher, initiative coordinator; Allie Prescott, communications specialist, and Andy Cross, financial specialist. During this transition, the new team focused on growing and solidifying relationships with in-field facilitators, coordinators, and volunteers who have passionately supported and facilitated workshops.

In 2016, each of PLA's programs focused work with at-risk youth, teachers, war survivors, former and active gang members, prison personnel, indigenous communities and grassroots leaders. Some program highlights include: the first ever workshop in a Mayan language in Guatemala; trauma healing workshops in El Salvador with female war survivors who have disappeared relatives; workshops that empowered women in Afro-indigenous and indigenous communities defending their land rights against illegal development in Honduras; workshops that provide rehabilitation for former gang members and prisoners in a Honduran prison; and workshops with victims of violence as well as demobilized guerrilla and paramilitary fighters in Colombia during the historic signing of the Peace Accords. For more information on our work, please visit: pla.friendspeaceteams.org/.

The African Great Lakes Initiative of Friends Peace Teams (AGLI) has continued its work in Central East Africa: Burundi, Rwanda, Kenya, and Democratic Republic of Congo. This includes Healing and Rebuilding Our Communities (HROC), Friends Women's Association's clinic in Bujumbura, Burundi, the Alternatives to Violence Project AVP, and other work. David Zarembka, the founder of AGLI resigned in August, and was partially replaced by David Bucura, a Rwandan. AGLI will be

seeking a US-based person for outreach.

FPT's office in St. Louis continues to be run efficiently and frugally by our administrative specialist, John Kintree. A new communications specialist, Hayley Hathaway, has been doing a great job updating our website and producing the beautiful new brochure. Tom Martin and Nancy Shippen continue as co-clerks. We are grateful to the many volunteers who help us and our partners abroad continue to do this work.

Please visit our website at: www.FriendsPeaceTeams.org.

Shirley Way, representative

**Friends Peace Team Statement of Activities
Year Ending October 31, 2016**

	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Total Support
African Great Lakes Initiative	\$ 203,214	31,115	234,329
Asia West Pacific Initiative	37,571	1,175	38,746
Peacebuilding en las Americas Initiative	27,398	24,304	51,702
Net assets released from restrictions (Note E)	39,441	(39,441)	—
<i>Total Support</i>	<i>307,624</i>	<i>17,153</i>	<i>324,777</i>

	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Total Support
Revenues and Gains			
Investment Income	209	—	209
Contributions	22,437	—	22,437
Meeting Income	18,700	—	18,700
Peace Quest	475	—	475
Other Income	1,322	—	1,322
<i>Total Revenues and Gains</i>	<i>43,143</i>	<i>—</i>	<i>30,253</i>
Total Support, Revenues and Gains	437,839	17,153	367,920

Expenses

Program Services			
African Great Lakes Initiative	245,510	—	245,510
Asia West Pacific Initiative	35,006	—	35,006
Peacebuilding en las Americas Initiative	31,952	—	31,952
<i>Total Program Services</i>	<i>312,468</i>	<i>—</i>	<i>312,468</i>

Supporting Activities			
Management and General	33,596	–	33,596
Fundraising	3,282	–	3,282
<i>Total Supporting Activities</i>	36,878	–	36,878
Total Expenses	349,346	–	349,346
Changes in Net Assets	1,421	17,153	18,574
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	41,278	56,399	97,677
Net Assets, End of Year	42,698	73,553	116,251

Indian Affairs Committee

From the first arrival of Quakers on this continent, there have been Friends who carried a concern for the Indigenous people whose home we had encroached upon. A committee of NYYM convened in 1798 with that shared concern. The Indian Affairs Committee is the longest standing committee of our Yearly Meeting. We know we stand on the shoulders of many Friends who have come before us. But 2016-17 has brought forward a notable change we hope will be sustained as we go forward.

This year for the first time (we believe) in the history of the committee we sought representation from the Haudenosaunee. After careful consideration it was agreed that such a liaison was in order and agreed to have Kay Olan, a member of the Mohawk Nation, join us for a one year appointment. Kay provided valuable contributions throughout the year, but most significant was the very well attended interest group supported by both IAC and Earth Care Working Group where she presented the “Thanksgiving Address” at Summer Sessions. For many of us, this partnership is of profound significance and long overdue. It is our hope that we will continue to earn this liaison and maintain it into the future which, more than ever, will benefit us all.

Much of our involvement in 2016 was focused on the participation of five members of the committee who attended the White Privilege Conference in April in Philadelphia. We were grateful for the experience but wished there might have been more consideration given to the early ethnocentrism and extermination of Indigenous Americans long before slavery.

Since the summer we have been very actively involved in the national and international role of the Standing Rock Sioux's Water Protectors blocking of the Dakota Access Pipeline in North Dakota. While many Friends were at Standing Rock many others supported this action in numerous ways including: donations, vigils, demonstrations and a NYYM delegation who went to Standing Rock for the the International Day of Prayer, and the threatened eviction of the Oceti Sakowin camp on December 5th and 6th. While many of them were at Standing Rock a halt was called on the drilling by the Army Corps of Engineers which was sustained until until the election of Trump. Please see articles in *Spark* for testimony of these Friends' time out there.

Other activities of the committee include but are not limited to, participation in:

- Support of the global voyage of the Hōkūle'a, the traditional Hawaiian sailing vessel.
- Two Row Paddle on the Grand River at Six Nations in Ontario where two IAC members paddled and IAC provided financial support in July.
- Friends of Ganondagan for Canandaigua Treaty Day, celebrated an annual day-long gathering/commemoration in Canandaigua of the treaty of 1794 between the Haudenosaunee and the US. It recognized Haudenosaunee sovereign lands in NYS and the federal responsibility to protect Native rights against abuses by the States. The process of treaty-making was witnessed by Quakers, who were trusted as unbiased observers by both sides involved in the treaty making.
- The 1816 Farmington Friends Meetinghouse and Museum 200th Celebration Committee invited Freida Jacques, Onondaga Clan Mother, to present at celebration weekend. This talk was partially supported by IAC, and led to further engagement in the celebration events from the Friends of Ganondagan and the State Historic Site at Ganondagan.
- Ancient Voices Forum at Six Nations in Ontario, where three IAC members attended. This was a 5 day symposium of Indigenous Principles and Practices, specifically geared

to invited non-natives.

- The Conference on: Quakers, First Nations, and American Indians from 1650's to the 21st Century at Bryn Mawr and Haverford in November which four of the committee attended and one presented, while, on the same weekend;
- Our other four IAC members brought the call for recommitting NYYM to supporting Leonard Peltier's clemency and a letter of support for Standing Rock by the yearly meeting to Fall Sessions, which were approved by the body.

Invitations to committee members to speak, present workshops and share their witness and journeys are increasing as result of this work in the wider world.

IAC has been very active in both the activities of concern and with the NYYM committees. We have been closely aligned with the Black Concerns Committee, EAQWER and the Earth Care Working Group under WCC. The clerk has been moved by the level of commitment of the committee members and grateful for the continued support of the work by NYYM.

We have provided financial support to the following projects:

- Akwesasne Freedom School—Mohawk Language Immersion
- Akwesasne Task Force on the Environment
- Kanatsiohareke Mohawk Community
- Friends of Ganondagan for Canadaigua Day
- Halawai Hōkūle'a World Journey
- Ndakinna Education Center
- Two Row on the Grand—Haudenosaunee and Native collaboration
- Onondaga Lake Fund—Onondaga Lake clean up
- Standing Rock Sioux—Water Protectors
- Haudenosaunee Speaker at the 1816 Meeting House
- FCNL Native American Project
- Blossom Garden Friends School- Quaker run school with Seneca children in the student body

- Seven stipends and one scholarship for Native American Students to pursue education.

See budget below.

Contributions for Standing Rock, new WCC contributions and new Trustee funds have given us the additional financial support to assist efforts otherwise not supported.

Moving forward:

Many felt a deep disappointment that President Obama did not grant clemency to Leonard Peltier and we encourage all who feel called to reach out to Leonard.

The presidential election challenged us all on many levels in many ways and have influenced us in IAC to look for new ways to move forward.

Three of the IAC will facilitate a workshop at the FGC Summer Gathering and we hope to make program contributions to Summer Sessions. The efforts on the part of so many Friends of the Water Protectors will continue. The seven generations before us call us forward as we face the unleashing of the “Black Snakes” of Indigenous myth and the challenging call from Mother Earth to save our home. We have every reason to believe that we will continue to find many Friends who will continue to support this work. The participation and leadership coming from young people in this movement is inspiring and we dare to imagine a paradigm shift.

We are reaching throughout the NYYM community for new IAC members. We hope to widen our IAC message by continued presence in monthly meetings. The interface with Indigenous concerns, environmental concerns and our youth’s growing awareness of the encroaching pipelines in all our communities is imperative and ongoing. We are humbled to help carry the Spirit of the Two Row flag of alliance with all beings.

Emily Boardman, clerk, with committee support and approval

Indian Affairs Committee 2016 financial report

Stipends:	\$2100
Marjorie Sexton Scholarship:	\$1500
Support for Native American initiatives:	\$7600

Support for Friends Groups:	\$1800
Support for program at Summer Sessions:	\$500
Support for committee members conference attendance (5 people):	\$600
<i>Subtotal:</i>	<i>\$14100</i>
Lindley Murray Fund: (for language program at Ndakkina Education Center)	\$1500
Total:	\$15600

National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund & Peace Tax Foundation

No report submitted.

National Religious Campaign against Torture

The National Religious Campaign Against Torture (NRCAT) is a membership organization committed to ending US-sponsored torture, and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment. There are over 300 religious organizations that are members of NRCAT including Baha'i, Buddhist, Catholic, evangelical Christian, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, Orthodox Christian, mainline Protestant, Quaker, Sikh and Unitarian Universalist communities. New York Yearly Meeting is a participating member of NRCAT. As such we name representatives to the Participating Members Council (PMC) and contribute financially to the organization.

Each month, the PMC holds a conference call. Judy Meikle regularly participates. On this call, the staff of NRCAT present updates on their areas of work—US Sponsored Torture and Drones, Anti-Muslim Bigotry and Torture in US Prisons.

At Summer Sessions 2016 there was a NRCAT display table and an interest group on solitary confinement. Copies of the NRCAT documentary *Breaking Down the Box* were available. Members of NRCAT work diligently to pass legislation to reform solitary confinement. In February 2017, a coalition of faith groups, including Wilton Monthly Meeting, organized to bring the NRCAT replica cell to New Haven Connecticut and to

the State Capitol to raise awareness and build momentum for reform in advance of legislation being introduced. Friends in New York State continue their work to support the HALT bill (Humane Alternatives to Long Term Isolation). In 2016, New Jersey passed far reaching legislation in both the House and Senate but the governor refused to sign it into law.

Judy Meikle, NRCAT representative

New Jersey Council of Churches

The New Jersey Council of Churches is actively providing educational opportunities for churches and the public here in our state. In 2017 the NJCC hosted two events. A seminar on the problem of drugs and their impact on communities. A second seminar focusing on the environment provided some practical activities that can be implemented within the church communities. Both of these issues are felt deeply by all Christians. The board meets twice each year and the council continues to work all year.

Kate Lawson

New York State Council of Churches

New York Yearly Meeting has two representatives to the New York State Council of Churches (NYSCOC), usually the clerk or immediate past clerk and one other individual; for the past several years this has been Sara Niccoli. NYSCOC is active under the direction of Peter Cook. Particularly exciting is the increased emphasis on gathering and disseminating New York state legislative information and alerts, an effort analogous on the state level to the Friends Committee on National Legislation, an organization that receives high praise from other members of the NYS Council of Churches.

Their work covers issues from housing to incarceration to re-entry from prison. Here are two examples of suggested NYSCOC actions item from March and May 2017:

ACTION: RAISE THE AGE

The New York State Council of Churches reluctantly supports

the Assembly version believing it still should include more kids including those with violent felonies. It should work with those excluded kids in the family court system where prospects of restoration are exceptionally higher than in the adult system. We urge people to see what is proposed by the Senate and then call their legislators and ask that they commit to the Assembly version and do nothing to water down the proposal any further.

ACTION: COMBAT HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Join in the fight against modern-day slavery today by asking your state representatives in the New York State Senate and Assembly to support groundbreaking and crucial legislation on human trafficking. The New York Senate and Assembly have introduced legislation (S.5955/A.06834) to lessen the prevalence of human trafficking in hotels and put systems in place to identify and protect victims.

If you or your committee would like to receive these alerts, please contact nyscoc@aol.com or pcook@nyscoc.org.

There are at least two other members of the New York State Council of Churches with constituencies that cross state lines, so New York Yearly Meeting is not alone in that respect and the council is aware of this.

Also exciting are the efforts of the NYSCOC to nurture spirit-led leadership and to bridge the urban-rural divide. Their first annual “Bridging the Urban-Rural Divide” Conference will be held July 18-20, 2017 in Johnstown, NY.

The group does good, faithful, spirit-led work and those of us who attend the meetings are heartened by them.

Lucinda Antrim, for the committee

Prisons Committee

The charge given to the Prisons Committee by the New York Yearly Meeting is to “carry out the witness of Friends concerning criminal justice”. We “foster spiritual development and Quaker studies for Quaker prison meetings and isolated prisoners, through Friends providing prison ministry” and we work for improvements in the system.

At this time there are eight prison worship groups within the

yearly meeting, under the care of a nearby monthly, quarterly or regional meeting. These are:

- Attica, Auburn, Cayuga, Orleans: **Farmington Scipio Regional Meeting Prisons Committee**
- Otisville, Sing Sing: **Purchase Quarter Prisons Committee**
- Woodbourne: **Morningside Monthly Meeting**
- Green Haven: **Poughkeepsie Monthly Meeting**

The NYYM Prisons Committee receives regular reports from each worship group via outside volunteers and we share the joys and concerns of the men who worship on the inside. We provide copies of *Faith and Practice* and other reading material as requested to further Quaker studies and we maintain a ministry of outreach to isolated men who have been moved to facilities without a worship group. This is through the provision of study materials and also an extensive mailing of greeting cards and calendars.

The Prisons Committee monitors whether the NYS Department of Corrections and Community Supervision is upholding the rights of our worship groups to practice their faith in the manner of Friends. This year the committee recorded their support for one of our worship groups that is considering entering into litigation with DOCCS regarding their right to hold quarterly meetings. This matter is ongoing and we hold the men in the light as they discern their way forward.

At Summer Sessions 2016, the Prisons Committee considered a proposal to establish a reintegration grant for members of our worship groups (registered as Quakers) coming home on parole. An outline proposal was approved and the committee continues to discern a process for dispersing of funds.

An ARCH (Aging Resources Consultation and Help) workshop was held in Attica in March and more workshops have been requested at other facilities. Funding has been allocated from the Prisons Committee Budget for ARCH workbooks for worship groups.

Anti-racism has been a thread this year. Members of the Prisons Committee attended the White Privilege Conference in Philadelphia in April 2016—one being sponsored by the Prisons

Committee. The committee has since been considering the following queries:

- *Do we approach our work through a lens of racial justice?*
- *Do white Friends on Prisons Committee acknowledge our white privilege?*
- *Do we recognize that the prison industrial complex supports white supremacy in the US and ask “What is my stake in ending this?”*

Some of our prison worship groups have been reading *Fit For Freedom Not For Friendship* by Donna McDaniel & Vanessa Julye, *Between The World and Me* by Ta-Nehisi Coates, and “Decentering Whiteness” a paper by Jeff Hitchcock and Charley Flynn. The Prisons Committee appointed two Friends to the Coordinating Committee of the Friends Center for Racial Justice in Ithaca.

The committee held a retreat at the Friends Center for Racial Justice in April 2017. Those gathered heard State of the Meeting Reports from four of our prison worship groups and read letters from members of Green Haven worship group. Members of the committee were moved by the words of the men, in particular their expression of feeling invisible to the yearly meeting and their deep appreciation for those connections that exist with the outside world of Friends. We agreed to create a State of our Prison Worship Groups Report to share widely and to find ways to encourage the men in our worship groups to actively reach out to their local monthly meetings.

The committee remains committed to lifting up the work of advocates for prison reform, informing the yearly meeting and engaging Friends wherever possible. At Spring Sessions 2017, the yearly meeting endorsed a letter to Governor Cuomo opposing his proposal to reduce visiting hours at maximum security prisons.

If the work of the Prisons Committee is of interest to you, please do not hesitate to reach out to us.

Robert Martin, Judy Meikle co-clerks

Right Sharing of World Resources

In 2016, Right Sharing of World Resources (RSWR) made grants to 42 projects in India, Kenya and Sierra Leone. The recipients of these grants, which range in size from \$4,000 to \$6,000, used the money to initiate microcredit projects aimed at giving poor and marginalized women a chance to start small businesses. According to the plans outlined in their grant applications, these organizations will have given small loans of \$100 to \$200 to 1,278 women. As the women repay their loans (to the NGO's, not to RSWR), the money will be loaned to other women in the same or nearby villages. Thus the number of women who received loans in 2016 is only the beginning. We hear from projects established a few years ago that their original pool of recipients has grown four- or five-fold.

The RSWR field representatives, one in each of the above countries, have a vital part in the process. First, they visit the groups who have applied for grants, to ensure that these groups actually exist, that the income-generating ideas have come from the women themselves, and that they are economically viable. The field reps are native to their respective countries, and are available to help the women's groups with problems that may arise. They offer or arrange for training in whatever businesses the women choose to start. Since many of the women are illiterate, they also need to learn how to keep accounts.

From the Sharing Fund, New York Yearly Meeting contributed \$2,606 to RSWR, or about half the cost of an average grant. Many individual Friends also contributed directly to RSWR, and for this we are very grateful.

Every six months, the board of RSWR approves a new set of projects. Descriptions of these can be found at www.rswr.org/newest-projects/.

William Penn House

No report submitted.

Committee on World Ministries

The World Ministries Committee distributes monies from various bequests as well as the Sharing Fund to Friends' Witness projects, mostly out of the yearly meeting but sponsored by a Friend within the yearly meeting.

World Ministries has revamped our grant-making procedures and clarified our mission statement this past year. All are welcome to get a copy from the NYYM website. We now meet four times a year rather than two and one of those times will be at Spring Sessions. In addition, the application letter we used to require has been replaced by a new, formatted form, available on the NYYM site. It gives prospective grantees more guidance in providing the information we are asking from them.

This year we continued supporting Getry Agizah's ministry, our Newton Garver Bolivia scholarship fund thru Bolivian Quaker Education Fund, Schenectady Meeting's ZFRA project in Africa fighting hunger, Blossom Garden Friends' School Book Project and the girls' scholarships at Turkana and Samburu Friends' Schools. Newer projects included Shirley Way's trip for AVP in El Salvador where she conducted a number of AVP workshops for women, and initial funding to start a new NGO called NEFESH (in English, New Family Initiatives for a more Humane El Salvador) which is to help the communities address issues present among youth, women and incarcerated people. Friends Peace Teams has greatly benefited this year with a grant to support a new communications specialist for Peacebuilding in Latin America (PLA), a new initiative, and Nadine Hoover's request for scholarship money for four preschool teachers thru Friends' Peace Teams in Indonesia.

The grants were approved by Arlene Reduto, Ed Doty, Martha Gurvich, Ro Press, Paul Rehm, Sue Weisfeld and Loomis Mayer.

Submitted in Peace and Friendship, Arlene Reduto, clerk

**NYYM World Ministries Committee
Winter 2015-Spring 2016 – Approved Grant Requests**

Grantee	Purpose	Amount
Schenectady Monthly Meeting	Famine relief to be distributed by Friends in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe	\$ 1,500
BQEF Newton Garver Scholarship Fund	Annual scholarships for two students in Equador	1,500
Youth Services Opportunity Program (YSOP)	for the Fellows Program	3,500
Orchard Park Friends Meeting	Textbooks and scholarships for Crossroads Springs School, Hamisi, Kenya	3,640
FUM–AVP–Belize	Creation of self-sustaining AVP program in Belize City, Belize	1,100
FUM–Friends Church Peace Team	Support for ministry of Team Program Coordinator	3,000
Mike Clark	Support for work projects done during 2015 trip to El Salvador with Young Friends	2,950
FUM–BioSand Filter/ Community Health and Sanitation Training in Ghana	Training for 30 people to supply and maintain clean water systems using low tech methods	3,400
FUM–Scholarships	Sponsorship of 3 girls from Turkana and Samburu to attend secondary school–this is the second year of a four year commitment	1,200

Total Distributed from Fall 2015 to Spring 2016 **\$ 21,790**

LIAISON COMMITTEE

The Liaison Committee consists of the yearly meeting clerk, assistant clerk, the clerks of the four coordinating committees, the general secretary, and, added in 2016 on a trial basis, the clerks of the Meetings for Discernment Steering Committee and of Trustees. The inclusion of these clerks has proven fruitful and will be continued for another year. Through a liaison, the committee keeps in touch with the Circle of Care and Concern, which cares for personal interactions during sessions. The yearly meeting clerk serves as clerk of the Liaison Committee. It is the committee's practice to meet in expanded form during Summer Sessions Monday through Friday mornings with the addition of the yearly meeting recording clerks, the yearly meeting reading clerks, and a representative from Junior Yearly Meeting, with visits from Sessions Committee. In 2016 the committee began an experiment of spending part of the time in small worship sharing groups, and finding that fruitful will continue that practice in 2017.

The Liaison Committee is responsible for planning Coordinating Committee Weekend, usually held in late January at Powell House. The committee serves in an advisory capacity to the yearly meeting clerk as needed. The committee continues its practice of meeting regularly each month by conference call. The committee considers rising business within the yearly meeting and recommends items for the agenda of yearly meeting business sessions. The committee also discusses matters of concern to the yearly meeting that do not fall clearly within the scope of any coordinating committee, that encompass the responsibilities of more than one committee, or that even if the responsibility of one committee, affect the broader yearly meeting body. For instance, this year the committee discussed the transition to a new general secretary and the proposal to try a pay-as-led system for Summer Sessions.

In 2016 the committee took under its care the Leadings and Priorities Working Group, which was charged with maintaining the connections between the life of our monthly meetings, refined its purpose and processes, and approved a revised name and charge, the Leadings and Priorities Support Working Group. This group continues to be under the care of Liaison.

Also this year we planned an interest group on clerking, which will be held this year at Summer Sessions.

Lucinda Antrim, clerk of New York Yearly Meeting

Leadings & Priorities Support Working Group

Since Summer Sessions 2016, the Leadings & Priorities Support Working Group (LPSWG) has met three times, one of those times by conference call. The charge and name of the Working Group had been clarified and revised prior to Summer Sessions, and members of the group have been working to live into the charge and to become more visible to the body of the yearly meeting. Several regions have appointed a representative, strengthening the vitality of the group.

Emily Provance and a few other volunteers researched and codified information from 2016 Advance Reports and other sources that indicate how yearly meeting committees are functioning. Christopher and other staff are working on developing a programmatic budget, showing how the yearly meeting budget is spent. This will be completed before Summer Sessions.

We have asked committees to include in their advance reports how they are implementing the leadings and priorities, especially the priority of having strong, vital monthly meetings. Currently, too many monthly meetings feel that the yearly meeting asks them for a covenant donation annually, and they don't receive enough back that is worthwhile. Although we have increased staff in the past few years, they cannot spend all of their time visiting monthly meetings. If they did, other aspects of their jobs would suffer. The yearly meeting staff and volunteer leadership need to become a working team that is visible to monthly meetings and aware of their needs and desires, and to make the many other resources of the yearly meeting more evident. The working group will take this as a priority in the coming year.

Deborah Wood, clerk