

2016
ADVANCE REPORTS

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

**Prepared for Summer Sessions
July 24–30, 2016, 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 2016–2017 *Yearbook* for consideration at sessions of New York Yearly Meeting in July of 2016.

Please note that the budgets and expenditures of many committees may be found in the Treasurer’s Accounts, page 68. Committees that have their own financial clerks submitted financial reports as part of their committee’s Advance Report. All financial reports are for the 2015 calendar year.

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NEW YORK YEARLY MEETING

FALL SESSIONS

November 7–8, 2015

Doane Stuart School, Rensselaer, New York

Saturday, November 7, 2015, 9:30 a.m.

Lucinda Antrim (Scarsdale), Clerk

Jeffrey Aaron (New Brunswick), Assistant Clerk

Karen Way (New Brunswick), Recording Clerk

Karen Snare (Bulls Head-Oswego), Reading Clerk

2015-11-01. The meeting opened with silent worship.

2015-11-02. The clerk introduced the members of the clerks' table and reviewed the agenda. The clerk also reminded Friends to read the Consent Agenda, which will be considered tomorrow.

2015-11-03. Anita Paul (Schenectady) welcomed us on behalf of the Host Committee and thanked individuals for their work in preparing for the gathering. She also expressed appreciation for the excellent facilities at Doane Stuart School. Several visiting Friends introduced themselves.

2015-11-04. Friends stood as their region and meeting were called. All regions were represented.

2015-11-05. In the absence of a copy of his memorial minute, Friends were asked take some time to hold Jim Oltman in the Light. A member of Purchase Meeting, Jim died in July at the age of 84. Friends spoke their loving memories of him.

2015-11-06. Deborah Wood (Purchase), clerk of Nurture Coordinating Committee (NCC), reported on plans for the funds remaining in the Young Friends in Residence (YFIR) program, which was laid down in July 2014. NCC recommended that all of the money in the YFIR fund (\$21,563.52 as of September 30, 2015) be returned to the NYYM operating budget. NCC noted that \$5,000 of that total is already planned for the proposed Children and Youth Secretary. Friends approved the recommendation.

2015-11-07. Matthew Scanlon (Scarsdale), clerk of Financial Services Committee, presented the proposed budget for 2016 (see page 63). New York Yearly Meeting (NYYM) will need to draw some money from reserves in 2016 in order to implement the Leadings and Priorities. This is not unusual for a non-profit organization starting something new. Matt emphasized the importance of donations and volunteer work for the health of the yearly meeting. Projected expenses for 2016 are \$586,723, an increase of approximately \$46,000. Projected revenue from Standard Sources is \$551,282, an increase of \$11,000. The difference of \$35,000 will come from balances in several NYYM funds.

Matt listed the programs that are receiving additional funds, and several Friends came forward to explain expansions and new projects. Matt also noted which managed funds are being accessed to supplement revenue. After a period of questions, clarifications, and suggestions, Friends approved the 2016 Budget.

2015-11-08. Friends also agreed that any surplus from 2015 be transferred to the 2016 Operating Budget as Other Income.

2015-11-09. The minutes were approved up to this point.

2015-11-10. Paula McClure (Montclair), Treasurer of NYYM, reported on the financial state of NYYM as of September 30, 2015 (see www.nyyym.org). Income, year-to-date, is \$329,840, 61% of the budgeted \$540,724. Disbursements were \$369,702, or 68% of the budgeted \$540,684. The corresponding numbers for 2014 were provided for comparison. Friends accepted the report. In response to a question on the “green” nature of our deposits, we were informed that NYYM deposits its CDs and money market accounts in the Carver Federal Savings Bank. Headquartered in Harlem, Carver was founded in 1948 to serve African-American communities whose residents, businesses, and institutions had limited access to mainstream financial services.

2015-11-11. Fredrick Dettmer (Purchase) of the NYYM Trustees, introduced Peter Phillips (Cornwall), who described the discovery that NYYM had no bylaws and the subsequent process of

creating them. A first reading of the bylaws was given at Summer Sessions 2015. In presenting the second reading, Peter reviewed which sections were taken directly from *Faith & Practice* and which were added for clarification and legal compliance. Friends approved the second reading and thus the new bylaws.

2015-11-12. Emily Provance (15th Street) reported on her inter-visitation with Baltimore Yearly Meeting (BYM) at their yearly meeting sessions in early August 2015. Emily described BYM and their generous hospitality. They have a strong inter-visitation program that reaches out to other yearly meetings and wider Quaker bodies. In their annual sessions, BYM tends to have more time in fellowship than NYYM or New England Yearly Meeting, but NYYM spends more time in worship. Emily listed a series of differences she found in BYM, along with some interesting new ideas. She noted that Baltimore and other Quaker groups all seem to be examining ideas around priorities and structure. Emily finished with positive examples of cross-pollination as ideas move from one group to another. Emily’s full report is attached (p. 11).

2015-11-13. The remaining minutes of this session were approved.

2015-11-14. After announcements, we closed with quiet worship.

Doane Stuart School, Rensselaer, New York
Saturday, November 7, 2015, 1:10 p.m.

Lucinda Antrim (Scarsdale), Clerk
Jeffrey Aaron (New Brunswick), Assistant Clerk
Andrew Mead von Salis (Brooklyn), Recording Clerk
Sylke Jackson (Rockland), Reading Clerk

2015-11-15. The clerk commenced the meeting at 1:10 in a spirit of worship. She introduced those at the clerks’ table and reviewed the afternoon’s agenda.

2015-11-16. The clerk called upon Matthew Scanlon (Scarsdale), clerk of the Financial Services Committee. He introduced a first reading of the new *Handbook* section on that committee by

describing the ways in which the text reflects our Leadings and Priorities as well as current practices and needs. He read the new text in full, and invited comments from individuals at the committee's meeting later today. The reading was received. (See page 15.)

2015-11-17. Barbara Menzel (New Brunswick), clerk of the Personnel Committee, introduced two interim, part-time Friends who were currently fulfilling some of the tasks of the Young Adult Field Secretary, Gabrielle Savory Bailey (Chatham-Summit), while her leave of absence continues. Their extensive experience with youth and young adults was reported. Emily Provance (15th Street) will be working with young adults and their meetings. Jillian Smith (Saratoga) will handle communications and media.

2015-11-18. Emily Provance (15th Street) and Rachel Pia (Syracuse), co-clerks of the Meetings for Discernment Steering Committee, came forward. They introduced the new *Handbook* pages proposed for the Meetings for Discernment and for their Steering Committee, and read the text of each in full, including some history and background as well as purpose and process. Friends' input was invited on these pages also. (See pages 17 & 20.)

2015-11-19. Christopher Sammond (Poplar Ridge), our general secretary, was invited to present his report. His oral presentation began with what news and hopes he had heard in traveling throughout the yearly meeting, which varied depending on who spoke and their circumstances. Amid that variety, an overriding theme was a desire that we "become one Yearly Meeting." He cited a Youth Institute, a Quaker Outreach Roundtable, other outreach and advancement events, and individual and covenant donations to New York Yearly Meeting, as reflecting new enthusiasm for our direction. Attention to earthcare, advance dialogue to prepare for budgeting our new ideas, and keener awareness of our community experience in "moving toward greater Light" were all encouraging signs Christopher saw among us. The report was received. (See page 22.)

2015-11-20. Next, Friends heard an announcement from Anne Pomeroy (New Paltz) and Lucy Harper (Rochester), co-clerks

of the Spiritual Nurture Working Group. They have been working with six monthly meetings so far to design and present workshops and retreats around the yearly meeting, and present the "Tending the Garden" retreat series at Powell House. They distributed for our reference color brochures of their offerings.

2015-11-21. Arlene Johnson (Chatham-Summit), taking the lectern, introduced a presentation by several teens and adults who created an Alternatives to Violence Project program for local area youth in the immigrant community. This was the first AVP youth camp in the nation. In response to news of violence in their New Jersey area, the project grew into an annual AVP summer camp. It has been supported by groups including our Witness Activities Fund and by 1,800 hours of volunteer labor. Stuart Sydenstricker, an adult coordinator, opened an AVP "Fishbowl" style talk in which teens and a parent spoke their personal impressions and experiences. Specific AVP techniques and lessons have proved powerful, so that self-respect and mutual respect have grown. Seeing this personal benefit has led parents to take a basic AVP workshop. Stuart concluded that Friends can use effectively the AVP experience of the Light working within us in many new settings. Friends moved into some minutes of worship to hold what we had heard.

2015-11-22. The minutes of this session were read, corrected and approved.

Powell House, Old Chatham, New York
Sunday, November 8, 10:15 a.m.

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

2015-11-23. Friends gathered in worship.

2015-11-24. Our clerk introduced those at the clerks' table. She also acknowledged the elders holding us throughout the room. The clerk reviewed today's agenda, noting that via a dream she

had this morning, she is learning to listen to the Light in new ways, and so the agenda has shifted. Our clerk invited us all to listen in new ways for The Word.

2015-11-25. Our reading clerk read the following poem provided by the Committee on Conscientious Objection to Paying for War:

Conscientious Objector

by Edna St. Vincent Millay (1934)

I shall die, but that is all that I shall do for Death.

I hear him leading his horse out of the stall; I hear the clatter on the barn-floor.

He is in haste; he has business in Cuba, business in the Balkans, many calls to make this morning.

But I will not hold the bridle while he clinches the girth.

And he may mount by himself: I will not give him a leg up.

Though he flick my shoulders with his whip, I will not tell him which way the fox ran.

With his hoof on my breast, I will not tell him where the black boy hides in the swamp.

I shall die, but that is all that I shall do for Death; I am not on his pay-roll.

I will not tell him the whereabouts of my friends nor of my enemies either.

Though he promise me much, I will not map him the route to any man's door.

Am I a spy in the land of the living, that I should deliver men to Death?

Brother, the password and the plans of our city are safe with me; never through me

Shall you be overcome.

(Edna St. Vincent Millay lived quite close to Powell House, towards the Massachusetts' state line. Her home, like the Shaker sites in the area, is worth visiting.)

2015-11-26. Judy Meikle (Wilton), reporting for the Yearly Meeting Task Group for the White Privilege Conference (April 14-17, 2016, Philadelphia), invited us all to participate actively

in the conference, of which NYYM is a host. She told us the many ways many communities of faith are connecting in support of racial justice. She reminded us of our own yearly meeting's work on this issue. Next April, Judy said, we can continue to put our words into action by getting on the bus and attending the White Privilege Conference. She summarized the workshops of past conferences, giving us a taste of what may happen in April. The conference theme is "Let Freedom Ring—Reimagining Equity and Justice in the United States." You will find like-minded people to talk to and explore issues, especially since about two thousand people attend. Judy asked us to consider whether we are led to attend and be part of the 100 participants promised from NYYM. The conference is a joyful occasion. Spread the word. Registration opens on Monday, January 18, 2016 (Martin Luther King, Jr. Day). Friends spoke to their support and appreciation of this work. Judy's full report is attached. (See page 25.)

2015-11-27. Robert (Sunfire) Kazmayer (Easton), speaking for Witness Coordinating Committee (WCC), read a "sign on" letter, circulated by the Global Food and Water Watch consortium, protesting hydraulic fracturing (fracking). The full text of the letter is attached (p. 30).

2015-11-28. NYYM approved our endorsement of the above letter, and our cover letter below. Both will be sent electronically to Global Frackdown to Paris.

The New York Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (representing eighty-four Quaker meetings and worship groups in New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut) meeting at its fall session on November 8, 2015, approved our Yearly Meeting clerk's and our general secretary's signing of this letter. It is consistent with our stand on hydrofracking and climate change given in the minute (resolution) shown below.

New York Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends Minute on Hydrofracking

Approved Fall Sessions, November 11, 2012.

New York Yearly Meeting has considered the potential consequences of High Volume Hydraulic Fracturing (also known as HVHF, horizontal hydrofracking, or fracking) in New

York State. We oppose hydrofracking in New York State and beyond. We urge our political representatives to prohibit the practice of HVHF in New York State. As Quakers, we experience the Divine through loving and truthful relationships with all people and all creation. After extensive efforts to inform ourselves about fracking we have concluded that it is inconsistent with our faith and practices which include a commitment to integrity, community, equality and care of God’s creation. We observe that the natural gas industry and government agencies have placed financial gain over the health of our communities and the environment. We see no legitimate reason to exempt hydrofracking from existing laws protecting water, air, land, and health, as is currently the case. In other states where horizontal hydrofracking has been performed, it has resulted in the loss of vast amounts of fresh water, the release of toxins into the environment, damage to communities, and cost to the tax payers.

We support legislation and incentives which promote research, development, and use of renewable and sustainable energy; support local farms and farmers; protect the air and water; enforce accountability for industries that risk environmental harm; and create economic policies that promote work for New York State residents that they can do in good conscience. We urge all citizens to thoughtfully consider the long term effects of hydrofracking on the water, land, local economy, infrastructure, services, and the community as a whole. We are encouraged by the many communities coming together to seek a way forward based on truth and respect. We are called to stand against fracking, and invite others to join us in opposition to this practice.

2015-11-29. Karen Snare (Bulls Head-Oswego) read an epistle from the Friends General Conference Central Committee, attached (p. 32). Central Committee has had to face the hard task of reorganizing their programs within the realities of their long-term financial situation. However, FGC will continue to be “a blanket of many colors...and the blanket warms us all.” Friends spoke to their appreciation of the work FGC has done, their concern for staff who have lost their jobs due to the restructuring, and acknowledged the deep listening of all those involved.

2015-11-30. Deb Wood (Purchase) brought a report on behalf of Nominating Committee, including new nominations listed below. These were approved as follows: Friends approved the nominations of those within the NYYM. Friends approved the nomination from outside of the NYYM. Friends accepted the request for release from service.

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Committee on Conflict Transformation | Class of 2018 |
| Wilber Bontrager | Farmington Friends |
| Committee of Conflict Transformation | Class of 2018 |
| Mason Barnet | PhYM * |
| NYYM Trustees | Class of 2020 |
| Keith Johnson | Chatham-Summit |
| Sessions Committee | Class of 2018 |
| Linda Houser | Purchase |

Release from Service

Kathleen (Kate) Lawson (New Brunswick)
New Jersey Council of Churches, Sessions Committee,
Worship at YM

(* by permission of the NYYM)

2015-11-31. The consent agenda, attached (p. 34), was approved. Friends approved also the nominations of those being co-opted.

2015-11-32. Claire Simon (Montclair), Spring/Fall Sessions liaison, brought the Sessions Committee report. She offered our thanks to the host committee, the host region, and the Powell House staff. She reported that 121 adults attended these Fall Sessions, and at least six young friends participated in the youth program. During their time together the youth made and served soup at a local homeless shelter, participated in AVP activities, and created an AVP “puzzle” epistle.

2015-11-33. John Cooley (Central Finger Lakes) brought a report from General Services Coordinating Committee (GSCC), of which he is clerk. First, GSCC has approved the Aging Resources Consultation and Help (ARCH) proposal to Friends Foundation for the Aging for a 2016 grant to continue ARCH’s work in NYYM. Nurture Coordinating Committee, under whose care are the

Committee on Aging and ARCH, also reviewed and approved the proposal. Second, GSCC approved the application to Shoemaker Fund for a new three-year grant, for which New England Yearly Meeting is the lead applicant and NYYM is secondary. If approved by Shoemaker, this grant, titled “Fostering Vibrant Multigenerational Meetings,” will be combined with provisions we have in our approved 2016 budget, thereby enabling us to hire a 70% part-time Children and Youth Field Secretary. NYYM Personnel Committee has drafted a job description in hopeful preparation for the awarding of this grant. We should know the decision from Shoemaker within a month. Friends asked for clarification on how grants are created and approved on behalf of the NYYM. John explained that grants, written by a committee and approved by a coordinating committee, are generally intended to provide the yearly meeting with an avenue for testing a program or position. As the end of the grant draws near, the yearly meeting has the opportunity to evaluate the program or position and decide if it should in some way be sustained via the operating budget. Actual practices may vary according to the original grant-requesting committee’s guidance.

2015-11-34. John then reported GSCC has approved the NYYM Trustees continuing to name a liaison to the Audit Committee (but not the treasurer of the trustees) and has approved associated changes to the Audit Committee’s NYYM *Handbook* page (attached, p. 36), which he presented for first reading.

2015-11-35. Mary Eagleson, clerk of Witness Coordinating Committee, brought forward announcements from Witness. A fund is being created in conjunction with the NYYM Treasurer to support friends attending the White Privilege Conference. Anyone can make a donation to this fund and the WPC Hosting Task Group (see minute 2015-11-26 above) is asked to decide on the particulars of the distribution of the funds and announcement of all information on the fund. Second, the Quaker Earthcare Witness (QEW) line item in the Sharing Fund is laid down, because QEW is a national organization, not a yearly meeting committee. Contributions from the yearly meeting to QEW will be made via a different line in the Sharing Fund. Third, the NYYM Earthcare Working Group will now have a line in the

Sharing Fund, as will European American Quakers Working to End Racism Working Group.

2015-11-36. The minutes were read and approved as amended.

2015-11-37. Friends settled into open worship before adjourning.

Attachments

Report on Baltimore Yearly Meeting Sessions 2015

Submitted by Emily Provance, Fifteenth Street Meeting

See minute 2015-11-12, page 3.

Dear Friends,

Some of you might not know—I certainly didn’t—that Baltimore Yearly Meeting does something really cool. Every summer, they informally ask a number of other yearly meetings to send a representative to their summer sessions, specifically for the purpose of intervisitation. This year, Jeff Hitchcock and Christopher Sammond asked me if I would go. I jumped at the chance, and I spent August 5th through August 9th with Baltimore Friends at Frostburg University in Maryland.

Actually, I’ve done quite a lot of visiting in the past little while. Since March, I’ve been to FWCC’s Section of the Americas (that’s Friends World Committee for Consultation), an event in Ohio sponsored by FUM (that’s Friends United Meeting), FGC’s gathering in North Carolina (Friends General Conference), our own summer sessions at Silver Bay, New England Yearly Meeting’s sessions in New Hampshire, and then Baltimore’s sessions. So while I’m going to focus on Baltimore’s sessions, since that was what I was asked to report on today, I don’t think I can stop myself from also mentioning lessons learned in other places. I’ll try not to let it sound too much like “what I did on my summer vacation.”

I’ll start with the basic stats. Baltimore Yearly Meeting consists of fifty monthly meetings, all unprogrammed, in Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and the District of Columbia. Like New York Yearly Meeting, Baltimore Yearly Meeting is

affiliated with FGC, FUM, and FWCC. Baltimore Yearly Meeting runs two summer camps, which are clearly very dear to Friends' hearts, but they have no conference center analogous to Powell House, so most adult Baltimore Friends, if they go to retreats at all, go to Philadelphia Yearly Meeting's Pendle Hill. [Editor's note: Pendle Hill is independently incorporated.]

Baltimore Yearly Meeting overflows with the gift of hospitality. Baltimore Friends reached out to me by email weeks before their sessions. They helped me plan my travel and met my shuttle van at midnight, after which two Friends walked me across the college campus to my room and even helped me make my bed. Friends sought me out at meals and specifically invited my participation in both business sessions and committee meetings.

Intervisitation has real life in Baltimore Yearly Meeting. Friends there don't just receive visitors; they also send them. The members of Baltimore Yearly Meeting's Intervisitation Working Group visit multiple yearly meeting sessions every summer. They also visit one another's local meetings pretty frequently.

The desire to meet one another and build relationships extends to Baltimore's approach to the sessions themselves. Each day of the week featured a plenary in which a speaker—often someone from outside Baltimore Yearly Meeting—offered a presentation on either the work of a broader Quaker organization (such as AFSC) or topics related to Friends' social justice concerns (such as the work of one presenter who has developed a new approach to the study of economics, centered in earth-care).

I didn't manage to access a full schedule of youth programs and young adult groups in Baltimore. However, in chatting with one of the "adult presences," I discovered that the teens, at least, have full-day programming in Baltimore Yearly Meeting, starting mid-morning and going into the night. They develop most of their schedule themselves, with adult presences taking part in all of their activities. Baltimore teens hold their own meeting for worship with a concern for business every night at about ten o'clock. Each age group, starting in middle school, has a clerk that reports to the body on the last day.

Many more things are happening in Baltimore that Friends here might find worthy of note. Their Peace and Social Action Committee (roughly analogous to our Witness Coordinating Committee) is experimenting with ways of using the yearly meeting website to enable monthly meetings to connect with one another and coordinate witness efforts.

Their clerk and interim meeting clerk (two different people, as used to be the case in New York Yearly Meeting) have begun hosting conference calls in which committee clerks can share the work of their committees with one another, to prevent redundancy and to allow for committees to build on one another's work. The calls also serve as a way for committee clerks to learn more from one another about best practices of clerking.

Baltimore's approach to writing and revising the committee handbook pages is radically different from our own, and my sense is that it might be considerably more efficient.

And, believe it or not, their business meeting minutes are much longer than ours.

Baltimore Friends had questions for me, too. One Friend was fascinated by our system of covenant donations. Several wanted to know about elders, the function of which is less widely understood in Baltimore. Many asked about our pastoral meetings. A couple wanted to know more about how we manage our State of Society report.

One more thing I found interesting . . . everywhere I went this summer, Friends were talking about their priorities. Most of you know how much time has been devoted to that in New York Yearly Meeting.

Baltimore Yearly Meeting is working on the same thing, although they're approaching it a bit differently, mostly by looking at their yearly meeting culture; they've formed two groups, one called the Growing Diverse Leadership ad hoc working group, the other called the Healthy Organization and Purposeful Evolution Committee. (In case you were frantically trying to figure out that acronym, it spells HOPE.)

New England Yearly Meeting, FWCC's Section of the Americas, FUM, and FGC are also all in the midst of (or just beginning, or just finishing) considerable restructuring or reprioritizing. What I find strange is that, in all of this work surrounding

structure, culture, and organization, there doesn't seem to be an effort to assemble Friends from all these different groups to ask the bigger—and I think, very relevant—question, “What is God’s purpose for large Quaker bodies?”

On the whole, visiting Baltimore and attending the other gatherings was an overwhelmingly positive and very educational experience. It also allowed for some great cross-pollination.

In Baltimore, I met a Friend who’s exploring the question, “How can the yearly meeting Ministry and Counsel Committee best support local meetings?” And I got the chance to come back to New York and put that Friend in contact with someone here who’s asking the very same thing. In New England, I met a Friend who’s been exploring new approaches to the State of Society Report. I connected her to a Friend serving on our own State of Society Committee. At the FUM gathering in Ohio, I met a Friend whom I was later able to recommend as a guest speaker at Friends Seminary. And in the van on the way back to the airport following FWCC in Mexico City, I met a Friend who invited me to an outreach roundtable in April in New Hampshire, which inspired the outreach roundtable held at Shrewsbury on October 10th of this year—which 25 Friends from 18 meetings attended.

God is moving in astounding ways through the entire Religious Society of Friends. I am grateful for the chance to bear witness to some of this movement. I have lots more to share . . . but I promised Cindy I would only take ten minutes, so my time is probably up. I’m excited to continue the conversation with anyone who’d like to do so.

Handbook page—Financial Services Committee, first reading

See minute 2015-11-16, p. 3.

Text in italics is new.

FINANCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE (2015)

Purposes & Objectives

To serve the yearly meeting in matters relating to financial needs and resources.

Functions & Activities

To prepare annually a budget based upon the recommendation of the coordinating committees and to propose methods for collecting the necessary funds to carry out the Leadings and Priorities. To determine the part of the overall budget that covers the administrative costs of the yearly meeting and its committees and contributions to other Friends’ bodies, together known as the Operating Budget. Financial Services will recommend to the Monthly Meetings the overall level of covenant donations needed to fund the Operating Budget and request each Monthly Meeting to discern the level they can contribute. To aid in programs of education and information that communicate to Friends the requirements and opportunities provided by the yearly meeting, its outreach projects, and the larger Friends’ bodies with which it is associated.

To review regularly the financial position of New York Yearly Meeting with the yearly meeting treasurer and determine any actions required to keep expenses and income in balance.

To serve in an advisory capacity to the yearly meeting, its committees, and regional and monthly meetings on all matters involving financial needs and resources, other than those assigned to the Trustees. Specifically, to inform clerks and treasurers of meetings and regions of the proposed budget and suggested covenant donations prior to Fall Sessions in November.

Organization & Method of Appointment

The committee comprises six members serving three-year terms,

one-third appointed each year, plus all regional treasurers, ex officio. Appointments are made by the yearly meeting on the recommendation of the Nominating Committee. The Treasurer of the yearly meeting, the treasurer of the yearly meeting Trustees, the assistant treasurers of the yearly meeting, the clerk of Witness Coordinating Committee's Finance Sub-committee, the General Secretary, and liaisons from the coordinating committees and the Leadings and Priorities Working Group are members ex officio.

The committee appoints its own clerk, assistant clerk, and recording clerk, and names a representative to the General Services Coordinating Committee.

Budget Process

All committees, groups or persons undertaking fundraising or spending within the yearly meeting, to the extent consistent with the directions and limits of any gifts or trust instruments, will coordinate their fundraising and spending activities with the Financial Services Committee so as to jointly further the implementation of the Leadings and Priorities.

1. *Early February after Coordinating Weekend: Financial Services requests estimated expenses for the following year from coordinating committee clerks and revenue from NYYM assistant treasurer, Trustees treasurer and Development Committee. As described in step II below, Financial Services will describe for monthly meetings how these expenditures will further the Leadings and Priorities. The coordinating committees are requested to relate the proposed expenditures to the Leadings and Priorities.*
2. *Early March: Letter is sent to monthly meetings describing the new initiatives identified by the coordinating committees and how these expenditures further the Leadings and Priorities and including the most recent Program Budget. The monthly meetings will be requested to comment on the proposed initiatives and the ongoing work described in the Program Budget. Meetings will be requested to submit their comments by late June.*

3. *Mid July: prepare revenue and expense estimate not including covenant donations and summarize comments from monthly meetings.*
4. *Summer Sessions: review comments from monthly meetings and revenue and expense estimates, decide on level of covenant donation request. Discuss content of covenant donation letter.*
5. *Early August: draft of covenant donation letter.*
6. *Late August: mail covenant donation letter, Sept–October; follow up on covenant donations.*
7. *Late October: Budget Saturday finalize proposed budget.*
8. *Fall Sessions; present budget on Saturday, make revisions, approval of budget.*

Meeting Time & Places

All meetings are held at the call of the clerk, and there are no stated times thereof. The committee has been meeting during yearly meeting sessions to prepare reports for presentation, review the financial state of the yearly meeting, and discuss those matters that have arisen since Fall and Spring Sessions. At the final meeting the committee will make appointments for the following year for clerk, assistant clerk, and recording clerk.

Finances

Expenses incurred by the committee are provided for by an allocation in the General Services Coordinating Committee operating budget.

Handbook page—Meetings for Discernment, first reading

See minute 2015-11-18, p. 4.

MEETINGS FOR DISCERNMENT (2015)

The Meetings for Discernment are an ongoing experiment of the yearly meeting. At Summer Sessions 2014, this experiment was minuted to continue through Summer Sessions 2016.

Friends approve the extension of Meetings for Discernment for an additional six years, at the end of which Friends will consider how and whether Meetings for Discernment are serving Spirit's purpose for New York Yearly Meeting. Two pages will be added to the New York Yearly Meeting *Handbook*: one for Meetings for Discernment and one for the Meetings for Discernment Steering Committee.

2014-07-24

History

Before there was a formal Religious Society of Friends, Friends gathered in Second Day Meetings for fellowship and to support one another in discerning leadings of the Spirit. In New York Yearly Meeting, a body was formed called the Yearly Meeting of Ministers and Elders, which became the Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel (YMMC) in 1955. The YMMC met annually to discern and seek clearness for leadings and to support the ministry of its members. The executive body of the YMMC was called the Coordinating Committee for Ministry and Counsel (CCMC). In July 2007, at the recommendation of the Transition Working Group, the YMMC was suspended and replaced by Meetings for Discernment, to be held at least twice yearly with three charges: to help strengthen connections between monthly meetings and the yearly meeting, to support individual leadings, and to help discern emerging directions within the yearly meeting. At the same time, the Coordinating Committee for Ministry and Counsel was restructured, with a change in name to Ministry Coordinating Committee and with the establishment of appropriate committees under its care (see NYYM minute 2007-07-38).

Functions and Activities

- Connect the body of the yearly meeting through extended worship, allowing time for deep listening for the movement of Spirit among us, without the constraints of agendas.
- Provide opportunities for Friends to be nourished by deeply grounded worship and moved by inspiring vocal and silent ministry, often around queries formulated by the Meetings for Discernment Steering Committee.
- Serve as a body to listen to what is rising within our

- monthly meetings, sharing concerns, cares, and leadings
- Discern the presence and movement of God, Spirit, the Light, in our hearts and in the yearly meeting as a whole.
- Help weave together the work of Friends active in the different meetings and regions of New York Yearly Meeting, enabling them to build strong, vital monthly and regional meetings.
- Consider issues that transcend the scope of any individual monthly meeting or yearly meeting section.
- Make recommendations to appropriate yearly meeting committees, or to the yearly meeting as a whole, communicating rising issues to the yearly meeting body.
- Hold ourselves accountable for the accomplishment of the above functions and activities.

Organization

The Meetings for Discernment are organized by a Steering Committee, which functions as a facilitating body (see Meetings for Discernment Steering Committee *Handbook* page, p. 20—proposed). The committee clerk is appointed by the Steering Committee. The assistant clerk of the yearly meeting may be asked to serve as clerk. Recorders are asked to take notes, which the Steering Committee uses to produce reports and recommendations. Elders (invited by the Steering Committee or others) from throughout the yearly meeting serve by grounding and holding the body in prayer and in the Light.

Method of Appointment

Each local meeting and worship group appoints one or two members, Friends who are well seasoned in the life of their meeting, to participate in the Meetings for Discernment. For continuity and growth in this yearly meeting body, three-year terms are recommended. Friends may be reappointed for a second consecutive three-year term. At their discretion, monthly meetings may choose to make appointments for shorter periods of time. Meetings are encouraged to report names of appointees promptly to the clerk of the Steering Committee and to the NYYM office for inclusion in the NYYM *Yearbook* and data base.

In addition to the named appointees, the Meetings for Discernment are open to all who wish to attend. The clerk of the yearly

meeting, the assistant clerk and the general secretary attend the Meetings for Discernment and serve as ex-officio members of its Steering Committee. The clerks of all yearly meeting coordinating committees (or named representatives) are encouraged to attend gatherings of the Meetings for Discernment and the Steering Committee.

Meeting Times and Places

Meetings for Discernment are held at least twice a year, once between Fall and Spring sessions and once during summer sessions, subject to continuing discernment of the needs of the yearly meeting. The winter Meetings for Discernment are held in meeting houses in different parts of the yearly meeting to encourage involvement of Friends who may not otherwise participate in yearly meeting-wide activities.

Finances

The yearly meeting operating budget provides money for administrative and travel expenses for appointees from monthly meetings and worship groups, and for those serving the Meetings for Discernment. These funds are provided through an operating budget line for the Meetings for Discernment and administered by the Steering Committee.

Handbook page—Meetings for Discernment Steering Committee, first reading

See minute 2015-11-18, p. 4.

MEETINGS FOR DISCERNMENT STEERING COMMITTEE (2015)

The Meetings for Discernment are an ongoing experiment of the yearly meeting. At Summer Sessions, 2014, this experiment was minuted to continue through Summer Sessions, 2016.

Friends approve the extension of Meetings for Discernment for an additional six years, at the end of which Friends will consider how and whether Meetings for Discernment are serving Spirit's purpose for New York Yearly Meeting. Two pages will be added to the New York Yearly Meeting

Handbook: one for Meetings for Discernment and one for the Meetings for Discernment Steering Committee.

2014-07-24

Purposes and Objectives

The Steering Committee serves as the facilitating body for the Meetings for Discernment.

Functions and Activities:

The Steering Committee determines the structure and focus of each Meeting for Discernment, including formulating queries or naming matters to be considered.

The Steering Committee oversees logistical arrangements, including choosing Friends to serve as clerks, elders and note takers for each Meeting for Discernment. For Meetings held outside of yearly meeting sessions, the Steering Committee names a liaison to work with the host meeting on local arrangements.

The Steering Committee produces advance materials for and reports on each Meeting for Discernment at yearly meeting sessions, and prepares an annual report for the yearly meeting. It disseminates these to the Meetings for Discernment appointees, monthly meeting clerks, and the wider yearly meeting body. It may offer recommendations to yearly meeting committees, to the body of the yearly meeting, and to monthly and regional meetings and worship groups.

Organization:

The Steering Committee appoints a clerk and a recording clerk for the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee clerk or another appointee represents the Meetings for Discernment in the yearly meeting budget process and when invited, at Sessions Committee and Liaison Committee.

Method of Appointment:

The Meeting for Discernment appoints approximately six at-large members to serve on the Steering Committee, chosen from among those who have participated in Meetings for Discernment. At-large members serve for staggered three-year terms and may be reappointed for a second consecutive three-year term. Names are proposed by a nominating committee

made up of Friends appointed by the Steering Committee who have been integrally involved in Meetings for Discernment, either through serving on the Steering Committee or in some other role. Once approved by participants at the next Meeting for Discernment, names of new Steering Committee members are reported to the yearly meeting in session to be recorded in the minutes of the yearly meeting, and are listed in the Yearbook.

The clerk of the yearly meeting, the assistant clerk and the general secretary serve as ex-officio members of the Steering Committee. In addition, the clerks (or named representatives) of General Services, Ministry, Nurture, and Witness Coordinating Committees serve on the Steering Committee.

Meeting Times and Places:

The Steering Committee meets monthly by conference call, at yearly meeting sessions, and at other times as needed. In addition members of the Steering Committee are expected to attend the Meetings for Discernment.

Finances

The yearly meeting operating budget provides money for Steering Committee expenses. These expenses may include: travel expenses for appointees from monthly meetings and worship groups and for those serving the Meetings for Discernment, including Steering Committee members. These funds are administered by the Steering Committee.

General secretary's message, as delivered to the body

See minute 2015-11-19, page 4.

The following is a written version of an oral report I gave at Fall Sessions. As I only became clear as to what I was led to share at about 4:00 am that morning, I did not have time to season it well. I have added some things that were missing in the oral report, and which I am clear to include here.

In my first two or three years serving New York Yearly Meeting, when visiting meetings, I would invariably ask "What do you think a yearly meeting is for?" I would hear a pretty consistent

response, that it was to help monthly meetings do what they could not do on their own, and to be a representative entity in the wider body of Friends and in the world.

More recently, the Priorities Working Group traveled around the yearly meeting asking some pretty similar questions, and got a fuller, more nuanced response, but one which is pretty much in keeping with what I heard years ago.

In both cases, what the words "New York Yearly Meeting" referred to was very ambiguous; different Friends meant very different things when they said those words. Some Friends meant the committee structure, some meant the staff and office, some meant those who gather at summer sessions. In rarer circumstances, some were referring to all the Friends who gather in worship across our entire geography. I think we need to be clearer with each other as to what these words mean. So, to clarify:

What is New York Yearly Meeting? We are:

- About 4,000 Friends, members, and attenders, worshipping regularly in New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut.
- About 85 monthly meetings and worship groups.
- Over 250 volunteers serving on many committees, supporting all of us and our common work.
- A staff of six Friends, working both full-time and part-time, out of our office in New York City, and from several home offices.
- A gathering of 500–750 Friends who gather at Summer Sessions each year

We are all of this.

And yet, we are something more, or at least we are called to be. We are called to be a people, called to be a body. There is great power in that, and we need the strength and spiritual power which come from living out that spiritual reality in our corporate life. And we are called to the common work of creating the Beloved Community, the Kingdom of God, the Reign of justice and love. We are not here to perpetuate our monthly meetings or the yearly meeting as institutions, or to try to preserve Quakerism per se. Our work is much bigger than that. We need to not lose sight of that.

Part of how I understand my work is that in traveling around

and witnessing what is going on in our meetings, and being in touch with the work done through our committee structure, I get a sense of our condition as a whole, and then reflect that back. And I would say that at this time, we seem to be at some kind of watershed moment, a turning point. I am witnessing a lot of new life and vitality. Some of this new life includes:

- The Outreach Roundtable held at Shrewsbury meeting-house, where 26 Friends from 18 meetings came to learn about and share best practices in doing local outreach.
- We had our first Youth Institute, lifting up a multi-generational approach to youth programming and teaching skills to Friends involved in First Day Schools.
- We have launched the Tending the Garden workshop series for monthly, quarterly, and regional meetings, interwoven with retreats at Powell House.
- We are supporting a wealth of witness initiatives, including AVP in the New Jersey prisons, AVP camp for undocumented teenagers, vibrant earthcare witness, anti-racism work, prison ministry, and more.
- The Advancement Committee is supporting a workshop designed to help local meetings do effective local outreach work.
- There is a heartening level of financial support for the yearly meeting operating budget, from both meetings and individuals. I consider this a valuable feedback loop; Friends are letting us know we are doing the right things.
- Some Friends are exploring how to use marketing tools borrowed from the secular world to share the truths we have found in our Quaker practice.
- We are beginning the practice of multi-year budgeting for the operating budget. We are recreating the YM website.
- We are working to create a staff position supporting children, youth, and young families taking better root in our local meetings.
- Many meetings are welcoming new members and attenders.

We are indeed turning some kind of corner here. It is hard to know cause and effect relative to the Statement of Leadings and Priorities and the individual and combined efforts and leadings

of Friends. I believe that to be something of a chicken and egg sort of question. But regardless of cause or causes, as a community we are moving assertively into greater Light.

What I know, in terms of both individuals and communities, is that greater Light also begins to make more visible things previously obscured in the shadows, the parts of ourselves we don't know, don't want to recognize, or don't want to own. Early Friends knew this capacity of the Light to illuminate parts of ourselves we need to face, anticipated it, and wrote about it. And as Mary Kay Glazer illustrated in her Bible Hours at summer sessions last year, journeying through those shadow places results in a stronger and deeper community. It leads us closer to the Beloved Community we are called to help birth.

So I am not fearful of the intimations I have of us moving not only into greater Light, but also towards that which prevents us from living into even greater Light. Both are opportunities, and I think we have built the capacity to move into both, confident in the strength of our community and the depth of our practice.

Christopher Sammond

Report—Yearly Meeting Task Group for the White Privilege Conference

See minute 2015-11-26, p. 6.

Good morning Friends

My name is Judy Meikle. I am a member of Wilton Meeting and appointed by the Prisons Committee to the yearly meeting Task Group for the White Privilege Conference, which is being held in April 2016 in Philadelphia. Our group is tasked to build a significant presence of New York Yearly Meeting Friends at the conference and I have a few minutes this morning to share with you our sense of excitement and enthusiasm about this task, and why we believe this is a huge opportunity for our yearly meeting.

First I want to state why I believe this is a particularly important moment in the movement for racial justice and a time when Quakers are being called to step up.

Last week, I participated in a national teleconference with

more than 100 white leaders from congregations and faith communities from around the country. The conference was convened by SURJ—the acronym is for Showing Up for Racial Justice—a group that began several years ago in response to a call from people of color requesting that more white folks join in the cause for racial justice and actively show up at events and actions. With attacks on black churches, attacks on students of color in their schools, and the ongoing deaths of people of color on our streets at the hands of the police, this call has become increasingly urgent and there is a critical need for white congregations and faith communities to respond.

SURJ leadership reported that what were once small numbers of people among faith communities has now become a flood and they are looking for ways to connect and ways to move from thinking about problems of racial justice to taking collective action. Leaders from different denominations reported how they are using different strategic focus groups and racial justice potlucks, sharing stories, and hosting events. There was a strong desire to connect with congregations of color.

A Quaker from Minnesota spoke of the racial justice work of AFSC and Friends General Conference and how Friends will be significant sponsors of next year's annual White Privilege Conference in Philadelphia.

I was greatly moved by this national inter faith response to the crucial questions asked of us by the Black Lives Matter movement—questions such as, Will you show up and support us in our hour of need? Will you step into leadership in your own communities and stand with us as we challenge inequality and injustice? Will you do the hard work necessary to understand our lived experience?

Friends in New York Yearly Meeting have responded to that call in many ways. For example, individual Friends are bearing witness to the systematic racism within the criminal justice system. Friends are standing with the Black Lives Matter movement at rallies and marches protesting police violence. The yearly meeting has spoken strongly in support of racial justice and equity through a minute on racism and white privilege (2009), an Apology to Afro-Descendants (2013), renunciation of the Doctrine of Christian Discovery (2013) followed by

a letter to the Pope in 2015 requesting that he, too, denounce the Doctrine, and a statement in support of Black Lives Matter (2014). At Summer Sessions this year, the numbers in our racial healing worship group swelled during the week from 17 to 35 as we considered how to maintain our faith and spiritual practices in the face of the brutality and despair of racism.

Next April, we can continue our momentum and keep putting our values into action by showing up in powerful numbers at the White Privilege Conference! We are already members of the host team and the task group has begun planning how to get a metaphorical (or literal) bus load of New York Yearly Meeting Quakers to Philadelphia!

Let me describe the conference. It is a three-day experience described by facilitators and participants as transformative. It brings together a multi-racial community in an intensive learning environment with workshops from beginner to advanced levels, plenary speakers, film screenings, and spaces to share and learn from each other.

Here's an A-Z sampling from last year's more than 120 workshops:

- Active Listening for Social Justice
- Building Anti-Racist Schools—talking about race and racism with children
- Compassion and Anti-racism
- Disease and Race
- Equity in the Environmental Movement
- Facilitating Difficult Conversations
- Get the Hell Out of Here!—the church leading the way
- How Do We Talk About Privilege—For Real!
- I Can't Breathe—integrating disability studies into our intersectional anti-racist perspective
- Karate Chops, Nerds, and the Asian Invasion
- Learning from the Elderly—Jim Crow's Legacy
- Monologs vs. Dialogs
- Not Whistling Dixie—breaking down the white wall of privilege
- Our Minds—Their Message
- Police Accountability & Citizen Oversight
- Race(ing) to the Border—the colonial legacy of U.S.

immigration policy

- Stop Blaming White People
- Teaching the New Jim Crow
- US Colonialism & White Supremacy in Puerto Rico
- We are Mike Brown—how the lost voices from Ferguson helped spark an international call for justice
- You Mean There's White People in my Movie?

So who might attend the White Privilege conference? The theme of the conference in April is Let Freedom Ring—Reimagining Equity and Justice in the United States. All Friends with a concern for peace and justice and equity will have a reason to attend.

Friends witnessing for indigenous peoples' rights, LGBTQ concerns, earthcare—you Friends will surely find the conference of interest. Friends engaged in youth ministry and working in education, involved with immigration issues or conflict transformation—you will find like-minded people to talk to. This conference is a really good place for Friends who are beginning to think about white privilege and what they can do. You will not be alone if this is your first step into anti-racist work and challenging inequality.

What are the details?

- Dates - Friday April 15 to Sunday April 17 2016.
- Separate Youth Action Project for high school youth meets Friday and Saturday then joins the main conference on Sunday.
- Registration opens on Monday, January 18 (Martin Luther King day).
- 2000–2500 available registrations could sell out fast. Register early!!
- Register through the FGC website. They offer a substantial discount on the full conference fee of \$375. Last year the FGC rate was \$184
- Other costs that Friends will need to budget for are travel, accommodation, and food.
- FGC is working on ways to keep these costs down, including local hospitality.

What do we ask of you at this time?

- First ask yourself whether you are led to attend the conference.
- If the answer is maybe, be sure to let a member of the Task Group know and sign up for regular email updates by contacting Jeff Hitchcock.
- Save the date
- Help us get the word out.
- Take information back to your monthly meetings. There is a flyer available on the table. And a packet has already been mailed to every meeting clerk.
- Encourage people to attend the conference and to sign up for the email updates. Ask that the meeting identify at least one, preferably two people, to attend the conference.
- In particular, ask if there are high school youth who are interested in attending. Mike and Chris are planning to take a group from Powell House, so that is an exciting option. Contact them for more details
- Identify sources of funding within your monthly meeting to help support Friends who are expressing an interest in attending the conference.
- Friends may need financial help in the form of scholarships. Donations to assist Friends with the cost of attendance can be made to the yearly meeting. Please write checks to NYYM and write WPC in the memo line.

Friends, please listen to how spirit is moving among us. How are we hearing the call from communities of color to show up for racial justice? One way we can do this is to gather together in a critical mass in Philadelphia in April. As you spread the word about the White Privilege Conference, please know that the gathering is a joyful one. It is not an atmosphere of blame and shame but a coming together to celebrate the work that we all do to fight inequality. Thank you for all that you do and for your support of the conference.

Organizational sign-on letter: COP 21

See minute 2015-11-27, p. 7.

Dear Head of State/Parliamentarian:

As the Conference of Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Paris (COP 21) approaches, we implore you to take bold action. This means not just setting emissions-reduction targets, but also by explicitly addressing the fundamental, science-based need to keep fossil fuels in the ground. Specifically, we call on you to reject hydraulic fracturing (fracking) and the use of acidization for oil and natural gas production and all of the related infrastructure.

Last December, Governor Cuomo of New York finalized a review of the health impacts of fracking and moved to ban the practice in his state. This move followed the lead of countries such as France and Bulgaria, which have also banned fracking. Such precaution is a response to mounting scientific evidence concerning the negative impacts of fracking, which include air and water pollution, public health problems, and earthquakes, not to mention the significant impacts that fracking, sand mining, pipelines, and other infrastructure projects have on communities, the environment, and public health.

With respect to climate impacts, it is true that burning natural gas produces less carbon dioxide than does burning coal or oil. For this reason, fracked gas has been touted as having climate benefits and billed as a bridge fuel.¹ However, the reality is that fracked gas is a bridge to climate chaos with no exit in sight. There are three basic reasons why.

First and foremost, increased natural gas use in the electricity sector does not just displace other fossil fuels, it also displaces cleaner solutions, such as solar, wind, and energy efficiency. These solutions are paramount to meeting the climate challenge, yet fracking and an expanded energy infrastructure based on gas will continue to forestall their deployment.

Second, more natural gas, and thus more of the potent greenhouse gas methane, is leaking from well sites and pipelines than previously thought, and methane is a more powerful greenhouse gas than previously understood.² As a consequence, the increase in methane emissions that comes with using natural

gas instead of other fossil fuels offsets and may outpace the decrease in carbon dioxide used to justify switching to natural gas.

Third, setting aside the industry's problems with methane leaks and looking at carbon dioxide alone, extracting and burning fracked gas threatens to release significantly more carbon dioxide than the world can afford. To avoid the irreversible effects of climate change, almost all of the natural gas that could be extracted by fracking must actually stay underground, unburned. That is the case even if aggressive global action is taken to wind down the use of oil and coal.

To illustrate this final point, it is widely accepted that no more than one-third of proven reserves of fossil fuels can be consumed prior to 2050 if the world is to have a better than 50-50 chance of avoiding two degrees Celsius of warming. But there are two ways in which this statistic understates the problem. First, it is only based on proven reserves—before accounting for most of the fracked gas, fracked oil, Arctic oil and tar sands oil now targeted. Almost all of this oil and gas must stay underground. Second, the estimate of “unburnable” proven reserves derives from dated climate science, and the two-degree threshold is too permissive. Now, climate science is clear that surpassing even 1.5 degrees of warming will lead to unacceptable impacts, particularly in the Global South.

Put simply, we cannot afford to continue down an energy path that relies on fossil fuels if we are to maintain the stability of our climate and the health of the planet. Despite this fact, vested interests have succeeded in convincing many governments that fracking for shale gas is a harmless “bridge fuel” toward renewables. This is a dangerous and deeply flawed point of view.

The world is facing a climate crisis that has already brought devastating impacts that will only escalate to catastrophic levels without swift action. Fracking amounts to inaction, and it is anathema to developing sustainable energy systems available to all and premised on the efficient use of safe, abundant, affordable, and renewable energy resources, subject to regional conditions and constraints.

At the Paris climate summit, it must be made clear that fracking for shale gas, tight gas, coal bed methane, and tight oil, as

well as other extreme fossil fuel extraction methods, are incompatible with climate stability. We implore you to support a ban on fracking and related processes, both as national policy and toward international agreements, and to make explicit the need to maximize the amount of fossil fuels to be kept underground and unburned.

Sincerely, [clerk of NYYM and general secretary signatories on behalf of the yearly meeting]

Epistle, Friends General Conference Central Committee

See minute 2015-11-29, p. 8.

October 25, 2015

To Friends Everywhere;

This weekend, over 130 Friends from fifteen yearly meetings and several directly affiliated monthly meetings gathered at the Pearlstone Retreat Center in Reisterstown, Maryland, to discern the future direction of Friends General Conference. We had hard choices to make. We had hoped to be talking about extending and expanding our programs. Instead, we spent the weekend deciding how to strengthen our fiscal foundations in the wake of a feasibility study that lifted up questions about how we use our resources.

We have come to realize that Friends General Conference cannot continue to rely on infusions of wealth from periodic fundraising campaigns, and must learn to make do with what comes in each year to our annual fund, supplemented by prudent spending from our reserves. Although this lesson has been a painful one, we feel confident in moving forward that we are approaching solid ground. We have agreed on program cuts that will bring us closer to a balanced budget, and are committed to living into a long-term sustainable budget. We know that the process of periodically pruning programs and refining goals is normal and natural, and we have seen other Quaker organizations go through a similar process in the past few years.

We have chosen to focus on three main goals: fostering and

nourishing collaboration among yearly and monthly meetings, growing and strengthening the Religious Society of Friends, and fostering more inclusive community. We are regretfully laying down our Traveling Ministries Program, and will be unable to continue Quaker Quest and New Meetings, which were funded by grants that have now run out. We will be discontinuing our self-publishing program, QuakerBridge. Couple Enrichment, which has been under FGC's care for 47 years, will continue as a largely independent project. We have approved these changes with a heavy heart, understanding the impact these decisions will have on Friends who use the programs, the devoted volunteers who provide ministry and witness through them, as well as the impact on our beloved staff who have helped coordinate and carry out the work.

Nevertheless, we face the future with faith and hope. Most of the services offered by FGC are still available to Friends, as are the resources developed by past programs. QuakerBooks required less of a subsidy than expected this year and seems to be growing stronger in its new premises at Pendle Hill. In addition to the traditional book tables, it is partnering with Quaker and Fair Trade vendors to offer new kinds of merchandise. Our new Spiritual Deepening program will soon be available to monthly meetings everywhere. The Quaker Cloud is beginning to reach its potential as a Quaker web collaborative, responsive to Quaker needs, and is providing services to a growing number of meetings. The FGC Gathering this past summer attracted far more Friends than expected, and our 2016 Gathering in St. Joseph, Minnesota promises to be just as wonderful. Our diversity work also continues, and we are actively preparing for the White Privilege Conference in Philadelphia in 2016 as part of the hosting team.

This year at Central Committee, we devoted an evening to exploring and reflecting on the continuing destructive impact of the Doctrine of Discovery and the efforts that are being made by people of faith, including a number of our yearly and monthly meetings, to have it renounced.

As the governing body of Friends General Conference, we are committed to shepherding FGC to a sustainable future, so that it can serve the Religious Society of Friends for years to come.

We might think of FGC as a blanket of many colors, knitted by many hands. Though some colors of yarn are added over time and others dropped, the work is never lost, and the blanket warms us all. We have been humbled and strengthened by our experience this weekend, and look forward to faithfully carrying forward the work and ministry of Friends General Conference.

Consent Agenda

See minute 2015-11-31, p. 9.

1] The **Committee on Conscientious Objection to Paying for War** is laid down and is replaced with a working group. Approved by Witness Coordinating Committee. For more information, contact Mary Eagleson, clerk, Witness Coordinating Committee.

2] Nominations:

Ministry Section

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|---------------|
| <i>Ministry and Pastoral Care</i> | | Class of 2018 |
| Emily Provance | 15th Street | |

| | | |
|-------------------------|--------------|---------------|
| <i>State of Society</i> | | Class of 2018 |
| Marissa Badgley | Poughkeepsie | |

General Services Section

| | | |
|-----------------------|----------|---------------|
| <i>Communications</i> | | Class of 2018 |
| Miranda von Salis | Brooklyn | |

| | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------|
| <i>Development Committee</i> | | Class of 2016 |
| Radames (Ray) Rios ('15) | Catskill (attender, co-opted)* | |
| Susan Weisfeld ('15) | Scarsdale | |
| Karen Tibbals ('15) | Rahway & Plainfield | |

| | | |
|--------------|-------------|---------------|
| | | Class of 2018 |
| Sandra Beer | Old Chatham | |
| Sara Niccoli | Brooklyn | |
| John Choe | Flushing | |

Nurture Section

| | | |
|----------------|-----------|---------------|
| <i>Epistle</i> | | Class of 2018 |
| Rima Segal | Rochester | |

| | | |
|---|--------|---------------|
| <i>Oakwood Friends School Board of Managers</i> | | Class of 2018 |
| William Reagan ('15) | Easton | |

| | | |
|------------------------------|----------|---------------|
| <i>Elsie K. Powell House</i> | | Class of 2020 |
| Anna Staab | Brooklyn | |
| Jillian Smith | Saratoga | |

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------|
| <i>Young Adult Concerns Committee</i> | | Class of 2016 |
| Mauricio Alexander | Brooklyn (attender, co-opt)* | |

| | | |
|------------------|----------|---------------|
| | | Class of 2017 |
| Isabella Aguirre | Purchase | |

Witness Section

| | | |
|-----------------------|----------|---------------|
| <i>Indian Affairs</i> | | Class of 2018 |
| Joseph Kulin ('12) | Saratoga | |

| | | |
|--|--------|---------------|
| <i>National Religious Campaign Against Torture</i> | | Class of 2018 |
| Judy Meikle | Wilton | |

| | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------|
| <i>Quaker Earthcare Witness</i> | | Class of 2016 |
| Pamela Boyce Sims ('15) | Hudson (attender, co-opted)* | |

(* by permission of the NYYM)

3] Corrections:

Two Friends were incorrectly listed in the Summer Sessions consent agenda as having new terms starting following Summer Sessions. These Friends were in the midst of existing terms and should not have been shown as starting in a new class. Friends are asked to approve this confirmation of the correct information as to their committee classes:

| | | |
|-----------------------|----------|---------------|
| <i>Indian Affairs</i> | | Class of 2017 |
| Rebekah Rice | Saratoga | |

| | | |
|---|-----------|---------------|
| <i>Friends World Committee for Consultation</i> | | Class of 2017 |
| Gloria Thompson | Manhattan | |

Handbook page: Audit Committee

*See minute 2015-11-34, p. 10.
Changes indicated by italic font.*

AUDIT COMMITTEE (2015)

History

The Audit Committee was established at Representative Meeting held December 6, 1980. Its purpose was to provide an annual review of the financial records of each yearly meeting committee. At yearly meeting sessions in 2001, a new Audit Committee was named and asked to articulate a new statement of purpose, which would reflect several changes in the yearly meeting's fiscal management and reporting practices. These changes included a sharp reduction in the number of yearly meeting committees that maintained their own accounts and records, and a decision by the yearly meeting that all its financial accounts and records should be professionally audited. *In 2015, further changes have been made in the Audit Committee composition and operations to support a consolidated audit covering both Trustee and Treasurer Managed Accounts, and to bring the yearly meeting financial procedures into conformance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP).*

Purposes and Objectives

Working with the yearly meeting treasurer and the treasurer of the yearly meeting's trustees, the Audit Committee will assure the yearly meeting that its *consolidated* financial accounts, records, procedures, controls, and reports are periodically reviewed and audited by competent outside professionals in the field of accounting, and will interpret the findings and recommendations of the resulting accountant's or auditor's report(s) to the yearly meeting.

Functions & Activities

1. Advise the yearly meeting on the recommended schedule and scope of review or audit activities.
2. Recruit and recommend an appropriate firm or individual professional to carry out the services recommended.
3. Review and advise the General Services Coordinating Committee on the appropriate engagement letter or contract.

4. Coordinate the planning and execution of the accountant's or auditor's work with the treasurers, bookkeepers, and other fiscal officers whose accounts, controls, or procedures are being examined.
5. Receive and review a draft of the professionals' findings and recommendations.
6. Advise the General Services Coordinating Committee on the timing and method of reporting to the yearly meeting (It is anticipated that custom will be followed in reporting an auditor's findings or opinions to the full governing body—in our case the membership—and that the widest practical exposure among those affected will be given to the auditor's recommendations to management.)
7. Advise the General Services Coordinating Committee on the release of payment for professional services under the terms of the engagement.
8. Evaluate the performance of those engaged for professional accounting or auditing services and advise on their suitability for future retention.
9. Help interpret professional findings and recommendations to the treasurers, bookkeepers, other fiscal officers, and others whose work may be affected by those recommendations.

The General Services Coordinating Committee retains its authority to contract and compensate professional services as recommended by the committee or, at its own discretion, to request or act on another recommendation. It also retains its responsibility for the ongoing oversight of financial policies, plans, operations, controls, and systems within the yearly meeting organization and for overseeing the adoption and implementation of any recommendations arising out of a financial review or audit. *Financial initiatives, changes, or procedural matters involving the yearly meeting Trust Funds will require prior approval of the yearly meeting Trustees before action by the General Services Coordinating Committee.*

Organization & Method of Appointment

The Audit Committee should consist of no fewer than three members, appointed one each year by the yearly meeting at

the recommendation of the Nominating Committee or Trustees for rotating terms of three years. *One member of the Audit Committee will be appointed by the yearly meeting Trustees; this appointee may not be the treasurer of the Trustees.* No member of the Audit Committee should concurrently serve as treasurer or assistant treasurer of the yearly meeting, as a member of the Financial Services Committee, or as an officer ~~or trustee~~ of any board or committee whose accounts and records are subject to a direct review or audit supervised by the Audit Committee. Members of committees whose work focuses on the allocation or distribution of funds for which management is not under their direct control are not precluded from serving, but they may want to consider the potential for conflict of interest before agreeing to serve.

While not a requirement for appointment, it would be helpful if members of the committee brought some previous experience working with business, nonprofit, or public-sector audits, as well as some familiarity with the yearly meeting's management and fiscal operations.

The Audit Committee will appoint its own clerk, as well as name a representative to the General Services Coordinating Committee.

Meeting Times & Places

The committee usually meets during *Summer Sessions*. Other meetings may be held at other times during the year.

Finances

The committee members may request travel expenses through the General Services Coordinating Committee budget.

The Audit Committee advises the GSCC on the cost of the outside auditor, which will appear in the operating budget of the yearly meeting. In recent years, the cost of the audit itself has been covered from annual income of the Trust Funds and included in the Trustee portion of the yearly meeting's operating budget income.

NEW YORK YEARLY MEETING SPRING SESSIONS April 2–4, 2016

First Baptist Church of Lincoln Gardens, Somerset, NJ
Saturday, April 2, morning sessions

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

2016-04-01. The meeting opened with silent worship.

2016-04-02. The clerk welcomed Friends, the spring weather, and the work God has gathered us to do in these Spring Sessions. She reviewed the agenda and introduced those at the clerks' table.

2016-04-03. The reading clerk read the roll call and f/Friends stood as their region was called. All regions were represented.

2016-04-04. Barbara Menzel (New Brunswick) welcomed us on behalf of Shrewsbury-Plainfield Half-Yearly Meeting which hosted Spring Sessions. Barbara thanked members of the hosting committee and announced that Spook Handy, a folk-singer who played with Pete Seeger, will offer music for the children and any available adults at the end of the afternoon.

2016-04-05. On behalf of NYYM in general and Powell House Committee in particular, Melanie-Claire Mallison (Ithaca) read a tribute proclaiming April 2, 2016, as Ann Davidson Appreciation Day. Ann is retiring after 22 rich years as Powell House director. Friends stood in gratitude.

2016-04-06. Irma Guthrie (Perry City), clerk of the Committee to Revise *Faith and Practice*, reviewed a proposed revision of Section G in *Faith and Practice* (section attached, p. 52). The changes reflect the new terminology of Spring and Fall sessions, plus other adjustments for grammar and new details. This was a first reading.

2016-04-07. Irma presented a first reading of a new section on the Use of Technology in the Conduct of Business:

USE OF TECHNOLOGY IN THE CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

The use of modern 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 telephone and video conferencing and electronic mail have made it possible to reduce the need for travel, and thereby have expanded participation by distant Friends. Our business can be responsive to the fast pace of developments in the modern world. Young Friends, who have grown up with these technologies, expect to use them as they integrate into the life of the Society.

Use of these technologies, however, which may replace or augment face-to-face meetings, requires discipline so that corporate worship, spiritual discernment, and the presence of the Spirit in our committee meetings and larger assemblies is retained. Each committee or meeting that uses these technologies should establish agreements and protocols to ensure that their use of communication will ensure inclusivity and full participation, protect privacy and confidentiality, and maintain collegiality.

Committees seeking to conduct business by ways other than physical meetings should do so only upon the unanimous consent of their members. Committees should use email to schedule meetings or distribute 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.

Friends spoke in response. Those with suggested changes were directed to speak with the committee. Concern was expressed for Friends who do not use digital technology.

2016-04-08. Irma presented a first reading of changes to our approval process. These changes were proposed by Ministry Coordinating Committee:

Proposed revisions to *Faith & Practice* may originate in a monthly or regional meeting or a yearly meeting body. When the proposed revision has been seasoned by the Committee

to Revise *Faith & Practice* and approved by Ministry Coordinating Committee, the Committee to Revise *Faith & Practice* may bring the proposed revision to any yearly meeting session for a first reading. After being brought forward the first time, the proposed revision is brought for a second reading and final approval to a subsequent yearly meeting session.

2016-04-09. Irma Guthrie, as clerk of Ministry Coordinating Committee, brought the recommendation that the Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel be permanently laid down. Irma reviewed the recent history of the Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel and how it was suspended in 2007 when we began holding Meetings for Discernment. Irma also explained how the responsibility for nurturing emerging gifts in ministry and the recording of ministers is now under the care of Ministry Coordinating Committee. Friends approved.

Friends spoke to the historical moment of this decision. Before there was a formal Religious Society of Friends, Friends gathered in Second Day Meetings for fellowship and to support one another in discerning leadings of the Spirit. As an extension of this practice of Friends in Great Britain, New York Yearly Meeting formed a body called the Yearly Meeting of Ministers and Elders. This body became the Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel (YMMC) in 1955 when the Orthodox and Hicksite branches of the yearly meeting reunited after separating in 1827. The YMMC met annually to discern and seek clearness for leadings and to support the ministry of its members. Now those functions will be carried out by the Meetings for Discernment and the Ministry Coordinating Committee.

2016-04-10. Minutes to this point were approved.

2016-04-11. Anita Paul (Schenectady) of Aging Resources Consultation and Help (ARCH) announced the publication of *Quaker Values and End of Life Decision Making Workbook*—24 pages that distill the information that has been offered for eight years in the five-hour ARCH workshop. The workbook is available for sale for the first time at Spring Sessions.

2016-04-12. Christopher Sammond reported as NYYM general secretary and spoke on the yearly meeting as a covenant commu-

nity. He described how we need community for discernment and courage as we travel our spiritual path. A covenant community means a people united in seeking the divine, and trying to live in the divine, while also aware that we live in Empire. We want to save our monthly meetings, but we need to avoid insularity. If we make our meetings outposts of the larger Blessed Community, they will thrive.

Christopher feels that we are moving towards becoming the beloved community we are meant to be, and that we have turned a corner toward renewal. We finally have enough yearly meeting staff to address needs, even though all our staff are stretched thin.

One of the signs of renewal is the hiring of a new staff member who will serve as Children and Youth Field Secretary. Other signs are rising energy for outreach, an increase in financial support, and the strong interest in programs such as the One Spiritual Community Retreat Youth Institute held at Brooklyn Meeting. The path to a true covenant community is “to follow our inner guide, to not outrun it, and to mutually support each other in this root of our faith as a people.”

Friends offered ministry in response. His report is attached (p. 56).

2016-04-13. The remaining minutes of this session were approved. After announcements, we closed with quiet worship.

First Baptist Church of Lincoln Gardens, Somerset, NJ
Saturday, April 2, 2016, afternoon session

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

2016-04-14. The afternoon session began with f/Friends gathering in open worship.

2016-04-15. The reading clerk read the following piece from Civil Disobedience by Henry David Thoreau, provided by the Committee on Conscientious Objection to Paying for War:

Under a government which imprisons any unjustly, the true place for a just man is also a prison. The proper place to-day, the only place which Massachusetts has provided for her freer and less desponding spirits, is in her prisons, to be put out and locked out of the State by her own act, as they have already put themselves out by their principles. It is there that the fugitive slave, and the Mexican prisoner on parole, and the Indian come to plead the wrongs of his race, should find them; on that separate, but more free and honorable ground, where the State places those who are not with her, but against her — the only house in a slave State in which a free man can abide with honor. If any think that their influence would be lost there, and their voices no longer afflict the ear of the State, that they would not be as an enemy within its walls, they do not know by how much truth is stronger than error, nor how much more eloquently and effectively he can combat injustice who has experienced a little in his own person. Cast your whole vote, not a strip of paper merely, but your whole influence. A minority is powerless while it conforms to the majority; it is not even a minority then; but it is irresistible when it clogs by its whole weight. If the alternative is to keep all just men in prison, or give up war and slavery, the State will not hesitate which to choose. If a thousand men were not to pay their tax-bills this year, that would not be a violent and bloody measure, as it would be to pay them, and enable the State to commit violence and shed innocent blood. This is, in fact, the definition of a peaceable revolution, if any such is possible.

2016-04-16. The clerk introduced those at the clerks' table and reviewed the upcoming agenda.

2016-04-17. Christopher Sammond (Poplar Ridge), reporting as NYYM general secretary, introduced Melinda Wenner Bradley, our new NYYM Children and Youth Field Secretary. Words that describe this Friend include: Quaker educator, collaborator, teacher of all ages, leader, coordinator, mentor, presenter, speaker, member. She has also been described by one Friend who knows her work well as “a Force.” And she is. Her work is informed by a quote by Maria Montessori:

Education is not so much teaching with love but participating, as one teaches, in the energy of God, who is love.

In her career as an educator and in service to religious educa-

tion programs, she has worked with children and youth of all ages. Her work has been shaped by listening to children and by collaboration both with teaching colleagues and the families of her students. For her, teaching and working in service to Quaker religious education programs has always felt like a leading and a place where she is called to grow. Her work has included growing sustainable models for children and youth programs, developing, identifying and sharing resources, and building networks to lift up the many gifts among Friends. She views spiritual formation of all ages as a ministry that our Religious Society can be more intentional in supporting. Among her many accomplishments: taught Godly Play and Faith & Play Curricula; created written materials for Playing in the Light and Learning in the Light trainings; supported grant-funded project for Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Children's Religious Life program; taught children of all ages, in Quaker schools, in Quaker meetings, and at gatherings of all types; served on the Pendle Hill Board of Directors; presented as a plenary speaker, FWCC World Plenary, Pisac, Peru, 2016; and led workshops on "Playing in the Light: An Introduction to Godly Play and Faith & Play for Friends" and "Learning in the Light: Faith & Play for Friends School Educators"; served on the NYYM Youth Committee; been a member of the Religious Education Association (professors, practitioners, and researchers in religious education).

Like Gabi Savory Bailey, her counterpart serving Young Adult Friends, Melinda will make herself available to all meetings in the yearly meeting to offer support in our efforts to better nurture our youngest members. But Melinda will also give extra focused attention to six project partner meetings, two meetings chosen in each of the next three years. As part of the grant from the Shoemaker Fund, and in collaboration with New England Yearly Meeting, she will work intensively with those meetings in an experiment to see how we can effectively help our children and young families to establish stronger roots in our monthly meetings.

Christopher encouraged us to welcome Melinda.

Melinda spoke to her work listening for spirit, reaching out across the full range of experiences to share the wisdom of all ages. She looks forward to working with NYYM monthly meetings and worship groups, sharing and learning.

2016-04-18. Mary Harpster (Rahway & Plainfield), reporting on behalf of the Powell House Committee, first noted that Heidi Kelly, clerk of the Powell House Committee, sent her regrets for not being here today. While we will miss Ann Davidson's leadership and presence at Powell House, the Powell House Committee is excited to announce that Regina Baird Haag and Dennis Haag have accepted the positions as the new Co-Executive Directors of Powell House. Regina and Dennis have been a part of New York Yearly Meeting for over a decade, during which time Regina served as the pastor of Adirondack Friends Meeting. Dennis and Regina have extensive knowledge, experiences, and relationships among the breadth of the Society of Friends, including ministry, spirituality, organizational, and committee positions. Over the years they have attended conferences and meetings at Powell House and their son, now a young adult, was a participant in the Youth Program. Dennis and Regina support the mission of Powell House, the New York Yearly Meeting priorities, and value the importance of continuing revelation.

Thanks to a wealth of life and job experiences, such as running a dairy farm, working as caretakers of Quaker Knoll Camp, training and managing bus drivers, and working to develop and coordinate YouthQuake, Regina and Dennis have gained a variety of skills that are a wonderful match for the wide range of responsibilities entailed in this work of serving as Co-Executive Directors.

Regina and Dennis are already in close contact with Ann and the Powell House staff. Regina will move onto the campus full time starting on July 1st and have a month of working full time alongside Ann before Ann retires. Dennis will initially work part time at Powell House as he finishes up his commitment to his current job.

Powell House is blessed to be able to welcome these two people, deeply grounded in the Spirit, and carrying such a variety of gifts, to help guide this beloved institution into the future.

Friends spoke to their joy to hear this announcement, welcoming Regina and Dennis. We asked and they shared that their favorite music is the Hallelujah Chorus sung in Powell

House's Perera ballroom, and "How Great Thou Art." We are encouraged to hold them tenderly as they grow into this very demanding job.

2016-04-19. Paula McClure (Montclair), NYYM treasurer, presented the 2015 year-end report (see page 68). She noted that the "elephant in the room"—the Audit Committee expenses—will not yet be discussed, since the issue first needs to be discussed later today by Audit and General Services. Paula explained that Sessions Committee went well over their budget due to the fact that Spring and Fall Sessions venues are now requiring larger deposits sooner, to hold spaces, and also, for the first time, Silver Bay Association required a \$1,000 deposit for our Summer Sessions. Finally, Office Operations (Computer Consultation) went over budget because we made our first down-payment on our new website. Friends spoke to the year-end numbers, and received the report.

2016-04-20. Emily Provance (15th Street) reported for the Meetings for Discernment Steering Committee, noting that the Meeting for Discernment at the 2015 Summer Sessions was rich. She continued by speaking to the laying down of our Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel (YMMC). Emily reminded us that while the form of YMMC has been laid down, the work has not. We have the records of their work and the wisdom those meetings have passed down. The work of spiritual listening continues. She invited us to attend Meetings for Discernment and bring with us those who are younger than us, newer to Quakerism than us, and those whose ministry has had a local focus. Our presence and theirs will enrich us and our yearly meeting. A Friend spoke to his experience of these meetings and the ministry that is not to be found nowhere else—ministry that may very well come from you.

2016-04-21. Robin Whitely (Chatham-Summit) and Arlene Johnson (Chatham-Summit) reported for the NYYM Outreach Working Group. The Advancement Committee has been suspended for the time being as no one felt led to step forward as clerk. It is clear, however, that Friends are interested in sharing our message with others and are looking for help in doing that. To help fill that need, Arlene and Robin are co-lead-

ing an Outreach Working Group for Friends who are interested in advancement to think about steps that they can take to share more of who we are as Quakers and what we have to offer to others. They are looking for three to five other Friends who would like to join them in this calling as it has become clear that many Friends are interested in advancement and sharing our message, but do not know how to move forward. This group will share ideas and explore ways to help bring the message of Quakerism to seekers who have not found us yet.

Arlene spoke of a "very unscientific" survey that they sent out and received back from 60 Meetings. They learned much, most especially that many monthly meetings are concerned about outreach, including reaching out to and supporting seekers.

If you are interested in serving on this Working Group, please contact Arlene and Robin. Find their contact information in the NYYM *Yearbook*.

2016-04-22. The Reading clerk read a travel minute from Poughkeepsie Monthly Meeting for Don Badgley, attached (p. 61). Don clarified that there will be a Committee of Care and that he will travel with an elder whenever possible. He also spoke to the movement of the spirit in his call to this ministry. Friends directed our clerk to endorse this travel minute, and asked that the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) be named as part of that endorsement.

2016-04-23. The minutes of this session were read and approved.

2016-04-24. After announcements, we closed in gathered worship.

Rahway & Plainfield Meetinghouse, Plainfield, NJ
Sunday, April 3, 2016, morning sessions

Lucinda Antrim (Scarsdale), Clerk
Jeffrey Aaron (New Brunswick), Assistant Clerk
Andrew Mead von Salis (Brooklyn), Recording Clerk
Elaine Learnard (Conscience Bay), Reading Clerk

2016-04-25. The meeting returned to calm after the rise of a morning meeting for worship, as the clerk called us to attend to

our business at approximately 10:25 a.m. The clerk introduced those at the clerks' table. She explained our last-minute agenda changes for today, encouraging us to hold the work lightly, taking time for answers to our questions to emerge.

2016-04-26. John Cooley (Central Finger Lakes), clerk of the General Services Coordinating Committee, reported that our desired consolidation of Trustees' and operating-account books had led to unexpected accounting expenses. These costs had already reached a multiple of their estimates. The Coordinating Committee recommended that this work be halted until the yearly meeting can reassess it, both among ourselves and in consultation with the accounting firm.

Frederick Dettmer (Purchase), current clerk of our Trustees, explained how our accountants, who keep the books, and our independent auditors are separate entities. For a new audit of increased scope, both must do considerable extra work. The Trustees had minuted yesterday:

The Trustees note that, pursuant to the bylaws, "The Trustees shall be responsible for holding title to and administration of the properties, both real and personal, owned by the Corporation." In that capacity, the Trustees expect that (a) no further payment will be made to the accountant, nor any payments to the auditor beyond \$10,000 until the Trustees are satisfied with the status of current and further work, and (b) no further work will take place for 2015 or the GAAP audit until the Trustees have assessed the work in hand for 2014, and the projected costs for 2015. Noting that the Audit Committee will pursue this inquiry, the Trustees expect to approve any decision with respect to the adequacy and cost of any further work on the GAAP audit or review. This minute will be conveyed to the Audit Committee and the General Services Committee.

Last night, the General Services Coordinating Committee met and minuted its unity with the Audit Committee and Trustees as to these decisions.

After some silence in which the situation was digested, Friends posed questions and answers were supplied. The regular bookkeeping work would continue, while the accounting firm would do no further work supporting the expanded audit project. It was not yet learned how or why the account-

tants incurred these cost overruns without any interim notice or billing to us. The impact and timing of the overruns on our financial statements were explained. Several factors that complicate any quantitative measure of the overruns and their impact were enumerated, but we were assured that the yearly meeting's financial viability was not threatened.

We received these reports. The yearly meeting approved our committees' plan and asked them to report further to us at our Summer Sessions.

2016-04-27. Frederick Dettmer presented our Trustees' plan for "Redesignation of Income From Trust Funds" dated March 20, 2016. He explained its stated overall purposes and the thinking behind the Trustees' process. Friends' input and comments were invited, and the Trustees expected to complete their plan before our Summer Sessions.

Fred addressed some questions from the floor. He explained that fund income can be in our operating account, though a fund may be restricted in purpose, because the specific expenditures they cover, such as a Friend's conference scholarship aid, are not investment management concerns that should rightly be decided by Trustees.

Friends heard the interim report, although a lack of unity was clearly expressed regarding the placement of restricted funds' proceeds into our operating account.

2016-04-28. Jeff Hitchcock (Rahway & Plainfield) and Judy Meikle (Wilton), co-clerks of the White Privilege Conference Task Group, reported on their work toward the Conference to be held in Philadelphia this month. The Conference was already fully enrolled, with approximately 2300 adult and 250 youth registrants, including about 500 Quakers of whom over 100 are from our yearly meeting. The Task Group was excited to report Friends' role as engines helping to power the Conference and build the strength of its message to the world. Friends organizations and meetings were already envisioning avenues of follow-up, though our Task Group was not yet clear as to what continuing role it may have.

The Task Group's report was received.

2016-04-29. A letter from a group of our children aged 6-12 in attendance this weekend was read. The children's own words urged us to conduct our Sessions without the use of plastic tableware and disposable plastic water bottles. The letter was attentively received, and we referred it to the Sessions Committee for a response.

2016-04-30. The reading clerk reads the clerk's report of the interim statements that the clerk and general secretary had issued in our name since our Fall Sessions, pursuant to our approved process for time-sensitive communications. The interim statements consisted of letters of solidarity and spiritual support sent to Friends in France and Belgium following terror attacks on cities there. Friends received this report.

2016-04-31. A report from the Sessions Committee on these Spring Sessions was read by its clerk, Melanie-Claire Mallison (Ithaca); 133 adults and 19 youth attended this weekend, for a total of 152 participants.

Melanie-Claire also read to us the Committee's report on a "Pay As Led" system of voluntary payment toward the operating costs of yearly meeting Summer Sessions, which had recently been tried by New England Yearly Meeting.

As many NYYM Friends may know, for the past two years, New England Yearly Meeting has experimented with a "Pay as Led" system for their annual session, meaning that, basically, they informed people how much a room would cost for the week and then invited everyone to attend, paying what they could afford. What NEYM discovered over those years is, not only did more Friends attend their Summer Sessions than in previous years, but the yearly meeting also did better financially with this system than they had with a more conventional one. They found that, when given the opportunity, Friends are both conscientious and generous. One point to note however is that at their Summer Sessions location, all accommodations are dorm rooms with a shared bath and they are all the same price.

With this information on NEYM's Pay as Led process, last fall, Sessions Committee tasked a small group to develop ideas for a 'pay as led' fee structure for NYYM Summer Sessions at Silver Bay. We hope, of course, that such a structure would

open the yearly meeting experience to more Friends. Creating a financially sound and yet flexible structure is complicated by the many levels of rooming options available to us at Silver Bay Association, however, the Pay as Led Ad Hoc Committee members, Dawn Pozzi (Rochester), Christopher Sammond (Poplar Ridge), and myself, Melanie-Claire Mallison (Ithaca), along with the entire Sessions Committee, feel strongly led to pursue this system of payment, bringing it to experimental fruition at the soonest, most appropriate time. Our intention is to offer a full report on our discernment at the 2016 Summer Sessions for discussion and consideration by the yearly meeting. Please feel free to contact the ad hoc members over the intervening months with your thoughts, concerns, and insights.

These reports are received.

2016-04-32. Frederick Dettmer, as a member of the Witness Coordinating Committee, read the Coordinating Committee's recommendation that we join the faith communities that had endorsed the "March For a Clean Energy Revolution" in Philadelphia on July 24, 2016. The Coordinating Committee also encouraged Friends who are so moved to join the March, though it was scheduled for a day during our Summer Sessions. After concerns were heard, Friends approved the request that our yearly meeting endorse the March, and the clerk was directed to sign the organization's endorsement form.

2016-04-33. Emily Provance (Fifteenth Street) introduced, read, and commented upon a report from the Young Adult Concerns Committee, signed by eleven Friends she named. Emerging from the YACC's talk and worship together, what arose was a Quaker Party in New York City, centered on about 200-250 young people from New York Yearly Meeting and beyond, for which June 17-19, 2016 has been scheduled. Commitments of resources, attendance, and assistance had been generous, and a plethora of events and activities had been planned. We were all asked by YACC to spread the word, offer sleeping spaces, and perhaps even donate a little money. Friends received the report.

2016-04-34. The minutes of this morning's session were heard, corrected and approved in stages during the meeting.

2016-04-35. Friends set aside the earnest busyness to conclude our worship in a few minutes of reflective silence and vocal ministry, rising at 12:40 p.m.

ATTACHMENTS

Changes to Faith & Practice (first reading)

See minute 2016-04-06, p. 39.

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

Part Two—PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE

1. Organization and Business Procedure

G. The Yearly Meeting (section with proposed changes, as follows:)

MEMBERSHIP. The yearly meeting comprises the entire membership of constituent monthly meetings, all of whom share in its deliberations. Members of other yearly meetings are welcome to attend yearly meeting sessions.

FUNCTION. The yearly meeting exists principally to worship together. It is a meeting for the transaction of business and can engage in any activity or foster any work that the membership considers appropriate. This may include provision of funds and supervision for common projects. By pooling efforts and resources, the yearly meeting can consider wider and more varied concerns.

The yearly meeting meets to conduct business in the spirit of worship three times each year: at Fall, Spring, and Summer Sessions. It approves the yearly meeting's annual operating budget. It receives memorials of deceased Friends.

Among its other functions, the yearly meeting issues to the monthly meetings queries, advices, and reports of its proceedings, and it maintains contact with other yearly meetings and Friends' organizations. It alone has authority to establish or change the Book of Discipline, or to issue statements of faith.

The yearly meeting should inspire and support its constituent meetings, broaden their awareness of other Friends' concerns, and help them develop their own concerns. Much of the work is carried forward by yearly meeting committees. The yearly meeting receives reports from them and from its constituent meetings. It reviews the State of the Meeting reports and considers communications addressed to it. It provides for the due consideration of epistles and of minutes of Friends from other yearly meetings.

It provides for participation in the work and financial support of Friends' groups including the Friends General Conference, Friends United Meeting, and the Friends World Committee for Consultation.

ORGANIZATION. The yearly meeting follows the general principles of organization and uses the same general business procedures as do monthly meetings, but it is more elaborate in structure due to the multiplicity and variety of functions that it performs. The New York Yearly Meeting is incorporated under Section 15 of the New York State Religious Corporation Law for the purpose of holding title to and administering property of the meeting and deeds of trust committed to its care. As such, any business meeting of the yearly meeting constitutes a meeting of the corporation, and all members of the yearly meeting are likewise members of the corporation.

The yearly meeting appoints a clerk to preside at its sessions, and carry out associated administrative functions. It also appoints an assistant clerk and such recording and reading clerks as may be needed to assist the clerk in the conduct of the meetings. It appoints a treasurer, assistant treasurer, and such administrative secretaries as it may decide to engage for designated functions.

The activities of the yearly meeting are carried on by four specialized sections—the Ministry Coordinating Committee, General Services, Nurture, and Witness—having the following functions:

- to develop and coordinate services and programs, implementing them directly or through committees, task groups, staff, or volunteers;
- to explore new ways of service and respond to concerns of individual Friends and monthly and regional meetings;
- to recommend for yearly meeting action any major change of activity within their general areas of responsibility; and
- to help plan yearly meeting programs.

The Ministry Coordinating Committee exercises general care of the ministry and spiritual life of the yearly meeting and receives and considers concerns of members or meetings regarding their spiritual needs.

The Section on Nurture is responsible for the advancement of the principles of Friends and for educational functions and personal services to members of the yearly meeting. Some of the interests have become the responsibilities of separate corporate entities, such as Powell House, and the Oakwood Friends School.

The Section on Witness makes visible both the traditional testimonies and the newer concerns of Friends in ways that extend beyond the Religious Society of Friends. Its work attempts to express beliefs in action.

The Section on General Services provides the main administrative, financial, and reporting services of the yearly meeting, including the operation of the yearly meeting office.

(More detailed information on the section is to be found in the current edition of the yearly meeting *Handbook*.)

Each section has a coordinating committee, composed of representatives chosen by its constituent committees and groups, as well as members-at-large appointed by the yearly meeting.

The Ministry Coordinating Committee, includes in addition, a representative appointed by each quarterly or regional meeting (two from Farmington-Scipio) for a three-year term, according to established rotation.

The coordinating committees are enabling bodies. They consider the activities within their respective sections in relationship to each other, assist in their coordination, and help allocate the resources of people, time and money. They prepare the section budgets, are responsible for their overall administration, and participate in preparation of the total yearly meeting budget.

The yearly meeting may establish or lay down committees according to the need for the conduct of particular functions of the meeting. Regular standing committees include, among others, Advancement, Financial Services, and Sessions. The yearly meeting also appoints representatives to various Friends' groups such as the American Friends Service Committee, Friends United Meeting, Friends General Conference, and the Friends World Committee for Consultation, and the governing boards of various other institutions or agencies.

When the yearly meeting establishes a committee, it must also determine and approve a statement of its purpose and functions and provide adequate funding. All appointments are to be made for a specified term. A current record of all committees and their membership is published annually in the *Yearbook* of the yearly meeting.

Four committees of the General Services Section fulfill specific administrative functions:

SESSIONS COMMITTEE: The Sessions Committee is responsible for selecting and arranging a suitable place for the sessions of the yearly meeting and for the preparation of schedules and programs. It advises committees on presentation of reports to the yearly meeting and serves as an advisory committee to the clerks during the sessions. It is responsible for publicity, hospitality, and financial arrangements for these meetings. The composition of the Sessions Committee appears in the yearly meeting *Handbook*.

FINANCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE. (To remain as is, with appropriate deletions of representative meeting if any.)

AUDIT COMMITTEE. (To remain as is, with appropriate deletions of representative meeting if any.)

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE. (To remain as is, with appropriate deletions of representative meeting, if any.)

YEARLY MEETING NOMINATING COMMITTEE. (To remain as is, with appropriate deletions of representative meetings if any.)

OFFICE AND ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF. The yearly meeting maintains an office staffed by a variety of professionals who implement or administer ministerial functions identified by the yearly meeting.

Report of the General Secretary

See minute 2016-04-12, p. 41.

On Being a Covenant Community

The following is based on an oral report given by Christopher Sammond at Spring Sessions, 2016. Some material has been added for clarification.

Part of how I understand one dimension of my work is to gather impressions of how we are doing as a community, and to reflect that back to us as a gathered body. What I have been led to share today would fall into that category.

We are called into deeper community, and deeper communion. This starts with each of us deepening individually in our walk with the Divine. There is perhaps no more challenging work than this. We can't do it alone. Parker Palmer has this to say about the need for community in the work of "sinking down to the Seed," of living out who God created us to be, central to our practice as Friends:

The journey toward inner truth is too taxing to be made solo:
lacking support, the solitary traveler soon becomes weary
or fearful and is likely to quit the road.

The path is too deeply hidden to be traveled without
company:

finding our way involves clues that are subtle and
sometimes misleading, requiring the kind of discernment
that can happen only in dialogue.

The destination is too daunting to be achieved alone:
we need community to find the courage to venture into
the alien lands to which the inner teacher may call us.

Parker Palmer

We are called to be in communion with each other, one with another, each of us with our whole meeting, and our meetings together forming one body of the yearly meeting—a body, a people. This is what I mean when I talk about Covenant Community—a people united in seeking the Divine and how to live in awareness of the Divine while at the same time living in Empire.

The Leadings and Priorities process has pointed us as a yearly meeting body to attend to how God is at work in our monthly meetings. This is a much needed orientation. But we run a risk here. We risk supplanting our true calling, to be faithful in living into Covenant Community, with the understandable desire to make our meetings prosper.

"He who seeks to save his life shall lose it, and he who seeks
to lose his life for the sake of the Gospel shall have life
abundant."
Luke 9:24

This extends to our monthly meetings as well. If we seek to save our monthly meetings, we will lose them. If we seek to save our monthly meetings for their own sakes, we run the risk of them only having life in themselves, not rooted and grounded in God. If we seek to make our monthly meetings outposts from which we create the reign of love and unity and justice which we variably call the Blessed Community, The Reign of God, the Kingdom of God, they will thrive. Our work is not to save our meetings, or to "save" Quakerism. Our work is to be faithful to the good news of the reality of the Beloved Community, and to invite others into what we have touched of that reality.

Of course, The Kingdom is something that is both here, and, "not yet." We catch glimpses of its power, we touch upon its Presence enough to know it is real, and we also struggle to live it out. There are symptoms, hallmarks, aspects of it that we can experience, and yet still struggle to live out fully. These are what I know to be aspects of the Blessed Community, lived out in our monthly meetings, and in the fabric of our wider community as a yearly meeting:

Open hearts: We live with hearts wide open to each other and to the Divine, tender and undefended, even as we do the difficult work of being community together.

Our wills directed to God: This is the core of every spiritual tradition, and certainly central to Friends efforts to shift from “the creature” to “the new Adam.”

Connected to one another: We are united in a covenant community, supporting each other in our search for Truth. We “carry” each other spiritually.

Effectively dealing with conflict: All communities have conflict. When we live out conflict effectively, it strengthens our community, rather than erodes it.

Engaged with the wider world: We are fully aware of, and engaged with, the currents of the world. We unflinching face that we live in Empire at the same time we are called to live out the Blessed Community.

We Are Turning a Corner

In many ways, I see us turning a corner as a community. This is really heartening to see. Here are some of ways I am seeing us live more into Covenant Community, living into the hopes behind the Statement of Leadings and Priorities:

- **Advancement and outreach:** I have never seen more energy, across this yearly meeting, for advancement and outreach as I am seeing currently. The new Outreach Working Group is an experiment in supporting outreach and advancement work across this yearly meeting in a new way. We are seeking to create a supportive network rather than to try to support outreach work through a yearly meeting committee. Friends involved in this network can participate as much or as little as they have leading and energy. We hope it will be a forum, a community, and an extended laboratory for how to do effective outreach work in our local meetings.
- **Meetings renewal:** Many of our meetings showing signs of renewal, with newcomers, families, children joining our worship. In many meetings, I sense renewed energy and enthusiasm.

- **Hiring a Children and Youth Field Secretary (CYFS):** With the hire of our newest staff person, we finally have barely enough staff to actually meet the needs we as staff encounter as we travel around the yearly meeting. For years, it has been particularly frustrating to me for us to not have enough staff to make a difference, which has left many Friends feeling like they did not get anything from their contribution to the yearly meeting, which in turn did not inspire them to give financial support, which meant that we lacked the funds to have staff to meet present needs, etc., in a “Catch 22” situation. We finally have enough staff to make the difference we need to make. At the same time, I need to tell you that your staff is stretched to the absolute limit.
- **Project Partners:** With the help of the grant from the Shoemaker Fund, and in collaboration with NEYM, our new Children and Youth Field Secretary will be giving concentrated attention to six Project Partner monthly meetings, working intensively with them to help them do effective outreach to young families and to do a better job of welcoming and integrating children into the fabric of their meetings. She will also be available for this same work across the yearly meeting, but in a less intensive fashion. If you think your monthly meeting might want to be a Project Partner, please look for information on that program, which should be coming out next week.
- **Witness Work:** NYYM’s Witness Coordinating Committee has been doing discernment on what witness work is arising and finding life in our constituent monthly meetings, so that the work done through the yearly meeting is a better reflection of that work.
- **Tending the Garden:** The Spiritual Nurture Working Group has now given quite a few workshops and retreats for monthly and Quarterly/Regional meetings as part of the Tending the Garden program, with more in the planning stages. Check out the yearly meeting website for information on the various retreats being offered both in local meetings, and at Powell House, as part of this program.

- **Supporting Children and Youth:** Fifty Friends, eighteen of them children, signed up for the “One Spiritual Community” retreat, sponsored by the Nurture Coordinating Committee and held at Brooklyn Meeting. And the Youth Committee has sponsored one Youth Institute, with another scheduled, gatherings designed to share best practices and learn new ones in better integrating children and youth into the lives of our monthly meetings.
- **Direction of the Yearly Meeting Organization:** The organizational aspect of our yearly meeting has been much more pointed towards needs of our constituent monthly meetings, in harmony with the Statement of Leadings and Priorities.
- **New Financial Contributors:** Our initial 2016 Appeal Letter highlighted this change of direction, with a surprisingly positive response. Many Friends who had heretofore not given were led to make contributions, including some sizeable ones. I take this to be positive feedback that we are heading in the right direction. If you have given in the past, and have not yet done so this year, please consider supporting our growing edges.

Risks of Insularity

It is unquestionably a blessing to witness the clearer direction, renewed energy, and focus on supporting the life of our monthly meetings. And yet, in this, I see a risk in our reinforcing a tendency I witness in some of our monthly meetings towards insularity. One study, done by FGC many years ago, and titled *Fostering Vital Quaker Meetings*, concluded that meetings not connected to some larger body, whether Quarter, yearly meeting, or larger Quaker organization, did not tend to do well. Over time, they lost vitality.

If we forget that the heart of our life as a community is our monthly meetings, we will cease to exist. We need to remember that without our monthly meetings, there is no point for us to exist as a yearly meeting. But if we are only about our monthly meetings, we will dwindle and die. If our focus is on preserving our meeting communities as an end in themselves, they don’t tend to do well. If we seek to bring about the Beloved Commu-

nity, the Reign of God, in and through our meeting communities, they will flourish.

If our meetings are only about themselves, as insular entities, we run the risk of having an idolatrous relationship with them. We cannot create community, any more than we can “create” vibrant worship by our own will. However, if we are intent on being Covenant Community together, on supporting each other in our walk with the Divine, endeavoring to live out the spiritual reality that we are a people, then our meetings will have life. The way to that life, as individuals, as communities, and as a people, is to follow our inner guide, to not outrun it, and to mutually support each other in this root of our faith as Friends of Truth, Children of the Light, and as the Blessed Community.

Travel minute for Don Badgley, Poughkeepsie Meeting

See minute 2016-04-22, p. 47.

December 13, 2015

Don Badgley, a member in good standing at Poughkeepsie Monthly Meeting, has brought forward a calling to travel in ministry, to share the “good news” of experiential faith. This ministry comes from a deeply personal spiritual place. His leading is to do outreach among Friends and in communities beyond meeting house doors to share the experience of that “place” of faith. He is hoping to encourage Friends to find more ways to express to the world their experiences of the Divine Light and to reach others by pointing to the Divine Light that guides Friends.

Don has received the call to travel in ministry with the understanding that as Friends we are called to preach and share the truth we discern under the guidance of the Divine Light. He will travel as led in waiting worship and by invitation.

Poughkeepsie Friends Meeting supports Don in his leading to travel in this ministry. The Meeting understands that the content of his ministry, which builds on his plenary message at NYYM in July 2015, will evolve as he continues to discern his leading.

The Meeting continues to encourage Don to diligently seek and follow the leading of the Spirit during this ministry. Don will travel with an elder whenever possible, to assist in seasoning his ministry and being attentive to the needs and concerns of those with whom he meets. The Meeting also encourages those who receive this ministry to do so with the same diligence in seeking to discern where the Spirit may be leading them as individuals and as communities.

Yours faithfully for Poughkeepsie Monthly Meeting,
Rachel V. Ruth, clerk

Approved _____

Meetings visited by Don Badgley are invited to endorse this travel minute and comment below:

Name

Faith Community

Date

2016 OPERATING BUDGET

| EXPENSES | | |
|--|----------------|----------------|
| <u>General Services Section</u> | 2015 budget | 2016 budget |
| Section Expense | | |
| General expense & travel | 1,000 | 1,000 |
| NYYM officers' expenses | 2,600 | 2,600 |
| Audit | 15,000 | 24,500 |
| Provision for Equalization Fund | – | – |
| Total section expenses | 18,600 | 28,100 |
| Committees | | |
| Communications Committee | 15,000 | 21,500 |
| Nominating Committee | 200 | 200 |
| Records Committee—Contrib to Frds Hist Lib | – | – |
| Sessions Committee | 10,000 | 10,000 |
| Development Committee | 4,038 | 4,500 |
| Total committee expenses | 29,238 | 36,200 |
| Office Expense | | |
| Office operations: | | |
| Administrative expenses | 12,000 | 12,000 |
| Insurance, D&O, liab, prop, umbrella | 9,000 | 11,000 |
| Rent @ 15th St | 27,000 | 22,000 |
| Utilities @ 15th St | 1,800 | 1,800 |
| Staff travel | 10,000 | 11,500 |
| Computer consultation | 500 | 500 |
| Office equipment | 1,000 | 1,000 |
| Total office operations expenses | 61,300 | 59,800 |
| Personnel expenses | | |
| Staff employees salaries | 200,476 | 211,184 |
| Staff Hourly Wages | 25,400 | 24,764 |
| Salary and wage-related expenses | 60,000 | 57,800 |
| YAFS Salary & Benefits | – | – |
| Staff development | 750 | 750 |
| Volunteer support | 400 | 400 |
| Total personnel expenses | 287,026 | 294,898 |
| Accounting/Bookkeeping services | 31,200 | 31,200 |
| Total General Services Section | 427,364 | 450,198 |

| Ministry Section | 2015 budget | 2016 budget |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Section expense | 700 | 700 |
| Programs | | |
| Advancement Committee | — | 5,800 |
| Bible study leader | 900 | 900 |
| Conflict Transformation | 600 | 600 |
| Ministry & Pastoral Care | 200 | 200 |
| Meeting Program Assist | — | — |
| Pastor's Conference | 1,250 | 1,250 |
| Provision for Meeting Visitation | — | — |
| Rep to Council on Minister Advise | — | — |
| Spiritual Nurture Working Group | 750 | 5,000 |
| Worship at YM Sessions | 100 | 100 |
| Task Group on Racism | 500 | 500 |
| Total program expenses | 4,300 | 14,350 |
| Total Ministry Section | 5,000 | 15,050 |
| Nurture Section | 2015 budget | 2016 budget |
| Section expense | | |
| Section expense | 1,700 | 1,200 |
| NYYM Resource Library | 300 | 150 |
| Total Section | 2,000 | 1,350 |
| Committees | | |
| Aging Concerns | 0 | 750 |
| FWCC Committee | — | — |
| Junior Yearly Meeting Planning | 1,500 | 1,000 |
| Junior Yearly Meeting Summer Sessions | 16,400 | 16,900 |
| Young Adult Concerns | 650 | 500 |
| Young Friends in Residence | 50 | — |
| Youth Committee | 250 | 500 |
| Total committee expenses | 18,850 | 19,650 |
| Appointees | | |
| FGC Central Committee | 1,400 | 1,400 |
| FUM Board Representative | 3,500 | 6,800 |
| Provision, FUM Triennial Sessions | 550 | 550 |
| FWCC Section Meetings | 4,070 | 3,625 |
| Provision for FWCC World Gathering | 900 | 2,000 |
| Provision for FWCC Regional Hosting | — | — |
| Total YM appointees expenses | 10,420 | 14,375 |

| | 2015 budget | 2016 budget |
|--|--------------------|--------------------|
| Allocations & Donations | | |
| Friends Council on Education | 150 | 150 |
| Friends General Conference | 2,500 | 2,500 |
| Friends United Meeting | 2,500 | 2,500 |
| FUM—Third World attendance to Triennial | 150 | 150 |
| FUM—Third World Board reps | 150 | 150 |
| Friends World Committee | 1,000 | 1,000 |
| FWCC Section of the Americas | 150 | 150 |
| Friends LGBTQ Concerns | 150 | 150 |
| NJ Council of Churches | — | — |
| NYS Community of Churches | — | — |
| Oakwood School | — | — |
| Powell House | 66,000 | 66,000 |
| Young Friends in Residence | — | — |
| Quaker Earthcare Witness | — | — |
| Total allocations & donations | 72,750 | 72,750 |
| Total Nurture Section | 104,020 | 108,125 |
| Witness Section | 2015 budget | 2016 budget |
| Section | | |
| Section | | 3,000 |
| Coordinating Committee | | |
| Total Section | 2,800 | 3,000 |
| Bolivian Quaker Education Fund | | |
| Committees | | |
| Barrington Dunbar | | |
| Black Concerns | | |
| Indian Affairs | | |
| Peace Concerns | | |
| Prisons | | |
| Right Sharing of World Resources | | |
| William Penn House | | |
| World Ministries | | |
| Total committee expenses | 700 | — |
| Appointee Expenses | 500 | — |
| Donations | 1,600 | — |
| Sharing Fund Campaign | — | — |
| Total Witness Section | 2,800 | 3,000 |

| | 2015 budget | 2016 budget |
|-------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Meeting for Discernment | 750 | 2,000 |
| Priorities Working Group | 750 | 500 |
| Provision for the 2017 Budget | — | 7,850 |
| Total Disbursements | 540,684 | 586,723 |

| | 2015 budget | 2016 budget |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Expenses Consolidation | | |
| General Services | 427,363.50 | 450,198.00 |
| Ministry | 5,000.00 | 15,050.00 |
| Nurture | 104,020.00 | 108,125.00 |
| Witness | 2,800.00 | 3,000.00 |
| Meeting for Discernment | 750.00 | 2,000.00 |
| Priorities Working Group | 750.00 | 500.00 |
| Contingency | 0.00 | 7,850.00 |
| TOTAL EXPENSES | 540,683.50 | 586,723.00 |

INCOME

Covenant Donations

| | | |
|--------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| All Friends | 43,360 | 42,260 |
| Butternuts | 4,411 | 4,500 |
| Farmington-Scipio | 71,846 | 73,500 |
| Long Island | 47,985 | 48,922 |
| New York | 77,652 | 78,005 |
| Nine Partners | 35,900 | 37,180 |
| Northeastern | 32,545 | 30,370 |
| Purchase | 64,734 | 68,124 |
| Shrewsbury & Plainfield | 51,916 | 53,261 |
| Covenant subtotal | 430,349 | 436,122 |

| | 2015 budget | 2016 budget |
|--|-------------|-------------|
|--|-------------|-------------|

Revenue – Other Sources

| | | |
|----------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Grant Administration | 6,500 | 6,660 |
| Interest Income | 2,000 | 2,000 |
| 2015 Budget Fund | 5,000 | — |
| Annual Appeal | 40,375 | 45,000 |
| YAFS Fund | | 1,500 |
| Total Other Revenue | 53,875 | 55,160 |

| | 2015 budget | 2016 budget |
|--------------------------------|-------------|---------------|
| NYYM Administered Funds | | |
| Contingency | — | 4,287 |
| Advance Lafayette | — | 5,800 |
| Meeting Visitation | — | 3,827 |
| YFIR | — | 21,563 |
| Total | — | 35,477 |

| | 2015 budget | 2016 budget |
|-----------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Income Consolidation | | |
| Meeting Income | 430,349 | 436,122 |
| Registration fees | 20,000 | 20,000 |
| Trustees | 36,500 | 40,000 |
| Other | 53,875 | 55,160 |
| NYYM-Administered Funds | — | 35,477 |
| TOTAL INCOME | 540,724 | 586,759 |

| | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| Total revenues | 540,724.00 | 586,759 |
| Total expenses | <u>540,683.50</u> | <u>586,723</u> |
| Difference | 40.50 | 36 |

OPERATING BUDGET 2016 — NOTES

1. A portion of contributions related to FUM, FGC, FWCC, and the entire contribution to 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 1/1/15 to 12/31/15

2015 Budget 2015 Actual

Disbursements and transfers:

General Services

Section expense

| | | |
|--------------------------|--------|-----------|
| General expense & travel | 1,000 | — |
| NYYM officer's expense | 2,600 | 1,448.62 |
| Audit | 15,000 | 42,630.00 |
| Total section expense | 18,600 | 44,078.62 |

Committees

| | | |
|-------------------------------|--------|-----------|
| Communications | 15,000 | 14,076.24 |
| <i>Handbook</i> | | — |
| Other | | 526.92 |
| Spark | | 7,185.08 |
| Web site/Yearbook/Adv Reports | | 6,364.24 |

| | | |
|-----------------------|-------|----------|
| Development Committee | 4,038 | 3,679.37 |
|-----------------------|-------|----------|

| | | |
|------------|-----|---|
| Nominating | 200 | — |
|------------|-----|---|

Records committee

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| Contribution—Friends Historical Library | | — |
|---|--|---|

| | | |
|--------------------|--------|-----------|
| Sessions committee | 10,000 | 15,342.51 |
|--------------------|--------|-----------|

| | | |
|----------------------|--|----------|
| Fall/Spring Sessions | | 7,600.00 |
| Summer Sessions | | 7,742.51 |
| Other | | — |

| | | |
|-------------------------|--------|-----------|
| Total committee expense | 29,238 | 33,098.12 |
|-------------------------|--------|-----------|

Office expense

| | | |
|-------------------------|--------|-----------|
| Office operations | | |
| Administrative expenses | 12,000 | 12,525.94 |
| Insurance | 9,000 | 10,743.15 |
| Rent 15th St. | 27,000 | 27,000.00 |
| Utilities 15th St. | 1,800 | 1,801.60 |
| Staff travel | 10,000 | 10,055.60 |
| Computer consultation | 500 | 2,620.00 |
| Office equipment | 1,000 | 60.75 |

2015 Budget 2015 Actual

Personnel

| | | |
|----------------------------------|---------|------------|
| Staff employee salaries | 200,476 | 181,983.21 |
| Hourly staff compensation | 25,400 | 24,971.07 |
| Salary and wage related expenses | 60,000 | 49,320.78 |
| YAFS salary & wage expenses | — | — |
| Staff development | 750 | 530.43 |
| Volunteer support | 400 | 451.74 |
| Accounting/bookkeeping services | 31,200 | 31,200.00 |

| | | |
|----------------------|---------|------------|
| Total office expense | 379,526 | 353,264.27 |
|----------------------|---------|------------|

| | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| Total General Services | 427,364 | 430,441.01 |
|-------------------------------|----------------|-------------------|

Ministry

| | | |
|------------------------|-----|--------|
| <i>Section expense</i> | 700 | 115.00 |
|------------------------|-----|--------|

Programs

| | | |
|------------------------------------|-------|--------|
| Bible study leader Summer Sessions | 900 | 846.00 |
| Conflict Transformation | 600 | 253.90 |
| Ministry & Pastoral Care | 200 | 200.00 |
| Pastor's conference | 1,250 | 767.25 |
| Spiritual Nurture Working Group | 750 | 381.97 |
| Worship at YM sessions | 100 | — |
| Task Group on Racism | 500 | 668.76 |

| | | |
|-----------------------|-------|----------|
| Total program expense | 4,300 | 3,117.88 |
|-----------------------|-------|----------|

| | | |
|-----------------------|--------------|-----------------|
| Total Ministry | 5,000 | 3,232.88 |
|-----------------------|--------------|-----------------|

Nurture

| | | |
|------------------------|-------|--------|
| <i>Section expense</i> | 1,700 | 450.00 |
|------------------------|-------|--------|

| | | |
|-----------------------|-----|---|
| NYYM Resource Library | 300 | — |
|-----------------------|-----|---|

| | | |
|-----------------------|-------|--------|
| Total section expense | 2,000 | 450.00 |
|-----------------------|-------|--------|

Committees

| | | |
|----------------------------|--------|-----------|
| FWCC Committee | — | 822.67 |
| Junior Yearly Meeting | 17,900 | 17,850.26 |
| Planning | | 3,106.00 |
| Silver Bay | | 14,744.26 |
| Young Adult Concerns | 650 | 650.00 |
| Young Friends in Residence | 50 | — |
| Youth Committee | 250 | — |

| | | |
|-------------------------|--------|-----------|
| Total Committee Expense | 18,850 | 19,322.93 |
|-------------------------|--------|-----------|

| | 2015 Budget | 2015 Actual |
|--|----------------|-------------------|
| <i>NYYM appointee expense</i> | | |
| FGC Central Committee | 1,400 | 346.00 |
| FUM Board representatives | 3,500 | 2,186.00 |
| Provision for FUM Triennial Sessions | 550 | 550.00 |
| FWCC Section Meetings | 4,070 | 4,070.00 |
| Provision for FWCC World Gathering | 900 | 900.00 |
| Total NYYM appointee expense | 10,420 | 8,052.00 |
| <i>Allocations and donations</i> | | |
| Friends Council on Education | 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>72,600.00</u> |
| Total Nurture | 104,020 | 100,424.93 |
| <u>Witness</u> | | |
| <i>Section/committee/appointee/admin expense</i> | 1,200 | 354.22 |
| Witness Coordinating Committee donations | 1,600 | 2,323.31 |
| Sharing Fund Campaign Expense *** | — | — |
| Total Witness | 2,800 | 2,677.53 |
| Meeting for Discernment | 750 | 582.00 |
| Priorities Working Group | 750 | — |
| Contingency | — | — |
| TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS | 540,684 | 537,358.35 |

* 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.

| | 2015 Budget | 2015 Actual |
|----------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------|
| <u>Receipts</u> | | |
| <i>Meetings</i> | | |
| All Friends Regional | 43,360 | 42,560.00 |
| Butternuts Quarterly | 4,411 | 4,701.00 |
| Farmington Regional | 71,846 | 73,789.50 |
| Long Island Quarterly | 47,985 | 47,187.28 |
| New York Quarterly | 77,652 | 81,374.00 |
| Nine Partners Quarterly | 35,900 | 34,130.00 |
| Northeastern Regional | 32,545 | 31,758.35 |
| Purchase Quarterly | 64,734 | 70,570.00 |
| Shrewsbury & Plainfield HY | <u>51,916</u> | <u>49,000.00</u> |
| Total meeting income | 430,349 | 435,070.13 |
| <i>Other sources</i> | | |
| Registration fees | 20,000 | 15,181.54 |
| Trustees/Endowments | 36,500 | 40,505.37 |
| Young Adult Field Secretary Fund | — | — |
| 2015 Appeal *** | 40,375 | 46,247.09 |
| All other | <u>13,500</u> | <u>8,580.09</u> |
| Total other sources | 110,375 | 110,514.09 |
| TOTAL RECEIPTS | 540,724 | 545,584.22 |
| Year 2015 Opening Balance | | 199,411.03 |
| + Receipts | | 545,584.22 |
| - Disbursements | | 537,358.35 |
| Closing Balance | | <u>207,636.90</u> |
| NET CHANGE | | (8,225.87) |

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

FUNDS REPORT (unaudited)

| Sharing Fund | Balance as of 1/1/15 | Sharing Fd Distribution | Fund Specific | Total Disbursed | Balance as of 12/31/15 |
|---|-------------------------|----------------------------|---|--------------------|---------------------------|
| AVP Donation | \$ — | \$ 3,518.40 | — | \$ 3,518.39 | \$ 0.01 |
| Barrington Dunbar | 11,560.07 | 10,555.14 | 1,055.00 | 15,200.00 | 7,970.21 |
| Friends for Black Concerns | 4,397.83 | 4,071.02 | — | 5,330.93 | 3,137.92 |
| Indian Affairs Committee | 4,308.34 | 8,042.06 | 5,973.37 | 10,750.00 | 7,573.77 |
| Peace Concerns | 7,031.70 | — | — | 1,300.00 | 5,731.70 |
| Prison Committee | 6,796.02 | 4,021.02 | 170.00 | 7,518.07 | 3,468.97 |
| Right Sharing of World Resources | — | 3,015.77 | — | 3,015.77 | — |
| Witness Activities | 7,235.89 | 7,539.43 | 1,500.00 | 6,285.00 | 9,990.32 |
| World Ministries | 27,794.09 | 5,026.30 | 9,731.83 | 37,384.01 | 5,168.21 |
| Conscientious Objection to Paying for War | 4,767.36 | — | — | 949.52 | 3,817.84 |
| Working Groups (MMA/Euro/Torture) | 3,991.87 | — | — | 375.00 | 4,119.49 |
| NYYM Named Representatives | 4,133.85 | — | — | 2,268.00 | 1,865.85 |
| Quaker Earthcare Witness | 354.43 | 1,005.27 | — | — | 1,359.70 |
| Witness to the World | — | 3,015.77 | — | 1,860.00 | 1,155.77 |
| Sharing Fund Endowment Income | — | 1,166.84 | — | 1,166.84 | — |
| Total Sharing Fund | 82,371.45 | 51,479.84 | 18,430.20 | 96,921.53 | 55,359.76 |
| General Sharing Fund Income Less Trustee Income | | 27,359.35 | | | |
| Sharing Fund Endowment Income | | 25,728.45 | | | |
| Total Sharing Fund Income Less Trustee Income | | 53,087.80 | | | |
| 2014 Sharing Fund Goal | | 55,000.00 | | | |
| Percentage of General Sharing Fund Goal | | 49.74 % | * excludes Trustee and Endowment income | | |

FUNDS REPORT (unaudited)—cont.

| | Balance as of 1/1/15 | Transfers from Oper. Budget | Other Income | Total Disbursed | Balance as of 12/31/15 |
|---|-------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Advancement Committee—Lafayette | 9,378.23 | — | 4,344.00 | 5,637.00 | 8,085.23 |
| Advancement Committee—Leach | 3,393.81 | — | 1,410.00 | 1,087.44 | 3,716.37 |
| Advancement Committee—Women | 102.57 | — | 211.51 | 291.99 | 22.09 |
| Equalization Fund | 4,239.80 | — | 12,167.25 | 13,824.64 | 2,582.41 |
| Aging Concerns | 73,773.76 | — | 85,529.00 | 84,268.31 | 75,034.45 |
| Aging Resources Website | 319.48 | — | — | — | 319.48 |
| <i>Faith and Practice</i> Fund | 3,897.88 | — | 2,053.50 | 3,770.00 | 2,181.38 |
| Sufferings Fund | 2,192.68 | — | — | — | 2,192.68 |
| FWCC World Gathering | 2,475.10 | — | 1,511.56 | 3,116.33 | 870.33 |
| FUM Triennial NYYM Attendance | — | 1,200.00 | — | — | 1,200.00 |
| Records Preservation | 1,237.39 | — | — | — | 1,237.39 |
| FWCC Regional Hosting | 1,860.00 | — | — | 611.56 | 1,248.44 |
| Meeting Visitation | 5,826.76 | — | — | — | 5,826.76 |
| Youth/Young Adults | 1,661.82 | — | — | — | 1,661.82 |
| Young Adult Concerns—Circle of Young Friends | 1,894.42 | — | — | — | 1,894.42 |
| Mosher Fund | 6,660.32 | — | 6,425.52 | 4,703.14 | 8,382.70 |
| Young Friends in Residence Fund | 21,513.52 | — | 50.00 | — | 21,563.52 |

FUNDS REPORT (unaudited)—cont.

| | Balance as of 1/1/15 | Transfers from Oper. Budge | Other Income | Total Dispersed | Balance as of 12/31/15 |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Young Adult Field Secretary | 10,164.30 | — | — | 6,924.98 | 3,239.32 |
| Fall/Spring Sessions | — | — | 9,047.20 | 8,968.60 | 78.60 |
| Conflict Transformation Film Project | 1,380.00 | — | 1,615.00 | 2,483.76 | 511.24 |
| Sabbatical Fund | — | — | — | — | — |
| White Privilege Conference | — | — | 340.00 | — | 340.00 |
| Annual Appeal Fund | — | — | 8,365.00 | — | 8,365.00 |
| Contingency Fund | 7,287.36 | — | — | — | 7,287.36 |
| Total Yearly Mtg Managed Funds | 159,259.20 | 1,200.00 | 133,069.54 | 135,687.75 | 157,840.99 |
| Total Funds | 241,630.65 | 52,679.64 | 151,499.74 | 232,609.28 | 213,200.75 |

MEETINGS FOR DISCERNMENT

Meetings for Discernment Steering Committee

It's interesting to note that in its original charge, "Meeting for Discernment" is described as a body, not as an event. The Meeting for Discernment is the group of Friends that comes together twice a year for extended worship, hearing one another's condition and how Spirit moves throughout the local meetings. In other words, once you have attended a gathering of the Meeting for Discernment, you are forever a part of the Meeting for Discernment.

The Meeting for Discernment Steering Committee is a much smaller group of Friends—currently ten—responsible for organizing the twice-yearly gatherings (one at summer sessions, one on a late-winter Saturday) and for carrying the concerns of the body between gatherings.

This year, the Steering Committee has, for the second year in a row, taken a serious look at the original charge of the Meeting for Discernment. Some pieces of the charge have been well met; other pieces have been less well met, or perhaps not met at all. Twice-yearly extended worship has born other fruits, however, not originally envisioned or included in the charge. Elders have developed their gifts; young and new Friends have offered rich vocal ministry; Friends belonging to host meetings have had the opportunity to feel part of something larger than their local groups.

The Meeting for Discernment's original charge includes a directive to "serve as a body to listen to what is rising at the monthly meeting[s] . . . and communicate rising issues throughout the yearly meeting body." This portion of the charge is similar to the charge of the State of Society Committee, though the process by which we listen and communicate is quite different from the process of the State of Society Committee. After recognizing this parallel, the Steering Committee worked this year to build informal connections between the two committees so that we could better share and more fully develop this important work of listening.

In the coming year, the Steering Committee hopes to continue providing space for deep worship; to listen to Friends' experi-

ences as part of the body of Meeting for Discernment; to issue warm, timely, and clear invitations to an ever-widening group of Friends, encouraging participation; and to pay attention to the emerging gifts of individual Friends and support those emerging gifts, particularly within our younger generations.

Emily Provance, co-clerk

MINISTRY SECTION

State of Society Report (pending approval by MCC)

What is the spiritual condition of your Meeting? What is the spiritual condition of your committee? What is the spiritual condition of New York Yearly Meeting?

We Are Here

When terror and war shook our world, when our brothers and sisters fled persecution and turmoil abroad, when tragedy struck our local communities, New York Yearly Meeting Friends were there. When our international leaders came together around climate change, when the Supreme Court affirmed same-sex marriage, when our people stood up against hate and injustice, New York Yearly Meeting Friends were there. When our federal systems failed the most vulnerable among us, when human rights were compromised, when schools and streets and places of business were soiled with blood and tears, New York Yearly Meeting Friends were there. We were there and we are here. And in a year so marred by political, environmental, and social tumult, we remain faithfully present. We will not go away.

With 89% of monthly meetings and 18 committees responding, this year's meeting and committee reports tell the story of this faithful presence. We are here. We are optimistic, joyful, grateful, and impassioned. Though our numbers are often smaller than we would like, our worship is rich and our communities are strong. Though many of us feel the pain of loss and the challenges associated with aging, there is a real sense that our meetings and yearly meeting will go on into the future. One report used the metaphor of a tree that has roots in the past and branches reaching out to the future: though its leaves fall away, new leaves grow. Though we sometimes mourn what once was, we are getting better at listening and responding to that which currently is and who we are now. We recognize that when we let go, the Spirit changes; when we come together in God's presence, it is no longer about treading water but instead finding ways to swim. We celebrate the short distances we have swum together this year and also the longer journeys yet to

come. We are here.

Friends consistently report that faith and community help meetings and committees face challenges with joy. We speak of healing, compassion, and kindness, recognizing that it is more often Spirit that brings us together rather than a physical setting. We speak of acceptance and affirmation, of supporting each other in times of stress and strengthening our spiritual connectedness through Quaker values like non-violence, social justice, speaking Truth, and environmental stewardship. We feel our meetings are spiritual families, oases of peace, havens for spirit and body, and safe places to share joys and concerns. Likewise, our committees speak of being a part of something greater, of faithful service and dedication despite a frequent shortage of people to perform the work. Grounded by passionate witness and by desires to push us toward sustainability and a more just world, we embrace our commitment to the yearly meeting's priorities and to making our yearly meeting and world a better place. We are here.

Meeting for worship is most frequently described as deeply enriching. It is a time to be "grounded in silence," to "grow in spirit," to commit ourselves to a "great sense of power and harmony with the Divine." At the same time, more than a third of our meetings express concerns over a lack of vocal ministry, many of us noting a delicate balance between a love of deep silence and a desire to hear and share vocal ministry. Though some meetings are concerned with a lack of spiritual depth in ministry, others are deeply moved by spirit-led messages when they occur. The common thread is that our worship brings us together despite our many differences in faith, understanding, and belief. Seekers are warmly welcomed as Friends offer hospitality, spiritual renewal and respite from worldly cares. Especially in our worship, we are here.

This year perhaps more than in past years, we have made a concerted effort to create opportunities for additional worship and fellowship beyond meeting for worship on Sundays. Almost half of our meetings report a rise in after-meeting and midweek discussions on social and spiritual topics, in addition to increased openings for Bible study, worship-sharing, pot luck meals, hymn singing, spiritual mentorship, community

service, and yearly meeting-led workshops. Meetings also share that their members and attenders are actively involved in workshops outside of the meeting, serving on yearly meeting and other committees, participating in AVP, ARCH, FLGC and prison witness work, and attending community events such as interfaith gatherings, vigils, parades, film festivals, and fairs. Our general secretary recently noted that he has never seen so much going on and while this "busyness" sometimes makes it difficult for us to do everything we wish to, there is a new and expectant energy circulating among us. We seem to be catching enthusiasm from each other and it is a blessing. We are here and as one meeting report put it, "[We]...hopefully, bring light to the troubled world."

The majority of our meetings and committees are concerned about diminishing numbers, aging membership, decreasing energy of long-time members, and travel distance for Friends. However, though our concerns are commonly shared, it is clear that our meetings and committees find themselves in starkly different places in terms of growth, satisfaction, and priorities. While 11 percent of our meetings reported decreased membership this past year, another 11 percent reported increased membership. While almost 20 percent of meetings celebrated the arrival of younger F/friends, families, new attenders, and visitors, more than 15 percent of us noted feelings of isolation, fragmentation, and the overburdening of a small membership with too many responsibilities. More than 15 percent of our meetings spoke of the attention given to pastoral care for aging members who can no longer drive or, in some cases, attend meeting at all. These meetings often keenly feel the loss of these experienced Friends and are increasingly concerned for the future. On the other hand, optimism runs deep in more than 20 percent of reports, with increasing attention paid to children, youth, young adults, and families. In this same vein, 10 percent of meetings remarked on the vitality of First Day School, the activity of young families and the joy in hearing the voices of children, while 10 percent more remarked that they do not have enough children to hold regular First Day School. In times of growth, death, and stagnation, we are here.

Similar tensions exist when we consider our structures and

physical spaces. With regard to meeting for worship with a Concern for Business, some meetings report that business processes are “rightly led” and efficient, while others find themselves avoiding difficult issues and concerned that only a small number of Friends regularly attend business meeting. While some meetings are having difficulty financially maintaining meetinghouses, they see the need for upkeep as an opportunity for workdays that raise the spirit of the meeting community and make the “sacred space” more welcoming. Others are questioning whether the time and expense needed are diminishing their ability to serve the spiritual and social needs of members. Our successes and challenges are sometimes vastly different but we are all still here.

On the yearly meeting committee level, we hear of passionate witness work and the intense presence of spirit, high quality clerking and increased cross-committee exposure. We hear a resounding commitment to the yearly meeting’s Leadings and Priorities, in addition to worries about how those priorities will affect work moving forward. More than half of the committees with whom we spoke expressed that there are not enough people for the work at hand, though a few reported vibrant and growing membership. Many committees struggle with finding face-time for meetings and more than a few feel that they are missing key representation from yearly meeting regions and age groups. A few clerks testified to their exhaustion and dwindling energy, while others seem to be bursting with vitality and momentum. In our energy and in our weariness, we are here.

Even as we applaud our seemingly boundless support of one other, we wonder what we can do to better support those of us who encounter difficulty. Everyone on their spiritual journey needs someone to walk with them, and as a society we continue to struggle in our efforts to bring in, engage, and keep our new and younger attenders. We are forced to ask ourselves difficult questions. How can a person be involved even if they are not serving on a committee? How do we give people the language to talk about their experiences of God? How do we create authentic opportunities for people to share these experiences? How do others know what is going on in our individual corners? How do we invite people into our corners when we see them gazing

in our general direction? How do we find the delicate balance between doing and being? How do we simultaneously embrace and reconcile widely divergent views among both members and attenders?

In our questioning, discernment, and seeking together, we are here.

Our differing conditions, approaches, and priorities make it difficult to discern a true and universal state of our society. Yet, on the whole, we are guided by Spirit and encouraged by the love that we feel within and without our meetinghouse walls. We embrace the spiritual presence of those who have worshiped among us but are no longer here. We recognize our diversity and are grateful for the myriad spiritual gifts in our midst. We rejoice in a sense of renewal and expectation that stands in wonderful juxtaposition with the doubts, fears, and worries of our past. We are here and we will remain faithfully present. Accompanied by God and Truth and Light and Love, we will not go away.

Marissa Badgley & Joy Weaver

Ministry Coordinating Committee

Ministry Coordinating Committee (MCC) met six times over the past year, at Summer, Fall, and Spring Sessions, and on Coordinating Committee weekend. Our meetings were rich and full and we often felt led by Spirit in the work that was brought before us.

Ministry Coordinating Committee oversees the work of the yearly meeting committees that guide the spiritual life of our meetings. They include the Advancement Committee, the Committee on Conflict Transformation, Ministry and Pastoral Care and the Intervisitation Group, the Spiritual Nurture Working Group, the Committee to Revise *Faith and Practice*, the State of Society Committee, The Committee on Sufferings, the Task Group on Racism in New York Yearly Meeting, and Worship at Yearly Meeting Sessions. The work these committees do is rich and Spirit-led and MCC is strengthened through the reports it receives and actions that are brought before it.

This past year MCC approved several revisions to *Faith and*

Practice from the Committee to *Revise Faith and Practice* and brought them to the floor for a first reading. These included a revision of the process for making changes to the Revision of Discipline, which came to the floor at Summer Sessions and again at Spring Sessions; a revision of the section on Covenant Relationships; a revision of the section on Spiritual Care of Members; and a new statement on The Use of Technology in the Conduct of Business. MCC also brought to the floor for a first and second reading a change to the section on Recording of Gifts in Ministry, which was renamed Care of Ministries and Recording of Gifts in Ministry. This latter revision was approved at its second reading.

With the approval of the Care of Ministries and Recording of Gifts in Ministry change to Faith and Practice, MCC was pleased to approve the recording of Margaret Webb in the ministry. The committee that brought this recommendation forward worked hard to discern how Spirit was leading them and were clear to recommend that Margaret be recorded. MCC approved the recommendation with grateful appreciation.

We heard reports and supported the work of the Task Group on Racism in NYYM, which has been asking for a clarification of their task. We listened to exciting new programs on “Tending the Garden” for local meetings and Powell House programs being offered through the Spiritual Nurture Working Group. We heard an update on the work of the Conflict Transformation Committee, which continues to do empowering work throughout our yearly meeting and beyond. We engaged with the task of the State of Society Committee by providing a query that could better reflect the spiritual condition of our yearly meeting and by thinking of ways to support this work.

This year MCC approved suspending the Advancement Committee, since no one stepped forward as clerk and only a few Friends committed to attending meetings. An Outreach Working Group, which will work with Friends who are interested in sharing our message, was formed at Spring Sessions 2016. Other responsibilities under the Advancement Committee are still being evaluated. It is clear that Friends are still engaged with sharing who we are and what we have to offer to seekers. For a while it will just be done through other means

than through the Advancement Committee.

We continued our discussion on “What do we as MCC do when members of our community experience situations in which they feel unsafe, unheard, and invisible.” We reviewed various resources that are currently in place, noted ways other Friends groups have approached similar situations, considered whether this is a task for the Conflict Transformation Committee, and acknowledged the need to involve Sessions and Liaison Committees. This is ongoing work, which MCC will support as called.

We were pleased to support the “Quaker Party”, the Young Adult Concerns Committee conference for young adult Friends from several yearly meetings in the area to be held at Fifteenth Street Meeting in June of 2016.

We responded to a request from the Meetings for Discernment Steering Committee regarding caring for those in our meetings living with mental illness. MCC was clear that this is a many-faceted issue that is mostly out of our area of experience and training but one that needs care and attention. Deepening the meetings’ worshiping community may be part of the response that we can support and guide.

This year MCC and Liaison Committee brought the recommendation that we lay down the Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Counsel (YMMC). MCC felt led to approve this recommendation after clarifying that the Meetings for Discernment were now meeting the roles that YMMC had filled but were not being addressed by other committees in the Ministry section. These include the nurturing of emerging gifts in ministry and the recording of gifts in ministry. Friends approved.

In all, the Ministry Coordinating Committee had a rich, full year. We felt led by Spirit on many occasions and did our best to act on what we were hearing as we were led.

Irma Guthrie, clerk

Advancement Committee

Committee suspended.

Committee on Conflict Transformation

The Committee on Conflict Transformation was invited to be of service to several bodies in the yearly meeting during 2015, including monthly meetings, and the yearly meeting organization. It also was active outside of New York Yearly Meeting.

At different times during 2015 the Committee was comprised of as few as four and as many as seven members, including members from All Friends, Farmington-Scipio, Nine Partners, and Northeastern regional and quarterly meetings, as well as a co-opted member from Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. The widespread geography of the Committee creates challenges in arranging face-to-face Committee meetings and in responding to requests for services. The wide net also means that we are collectively more aware of and more familiar to more of the yearly meeting than if we were closer to each other. We have adopted the practice of visits being accompanied by a spiritual companion, increasing the challenges in planning visits and workshops. The Committee met on retreat April 3-4, 2015, twice in person, and various times over the phone. Extensive phone and personal meetings among facilitators/elders were held to prepare for workshops.

The film made in September 2013 was completed and posted on the yearly meeting web site in 2014. This year a DVD of the film was completed and given to all meetings and worship groups in New York Yearly Meeting and sent to English-speaking yearly meetings around the world.

The Committee was called upon by monthly meetings and Quaker entities, and assistance was offered on the usual confidential basis. At Summer Sessions, the Committee again led a morning worship sharing group. The Committee also clarified for itself the role of various groups that address conflicts arising at Summer Sessions. Within the yearly meeting, three workshops were held during 2015 at the request of monthly meetings. Committee members were consulted by or visited three other monthly meetings this year, and worked to address an issue arising out of Summer Sessions.

The Committee was invited to conduct three workshops outside the yearly meeting during 2015: January 9-11, 2015, at Woolman Hill, the New England Yearly Meeting conference

center in Massachusetts; May 2, 2015, at the All Maine gathering in China Lake, Maine; and July 6-10, 2015 at the Friends General Conference Gathering in western North Carolina. Woolman Hill and All Maine covered the travel expenses of the Committee and made an additional contribution to the yearly meeting to assist the Committee in its work. These outside opportunities for service did not conflict with our work within the yearly meeting.

In 2016 the Committee will facilitate a conflict transformation workshop at Powell House, October 21-23. It also hopes to produce a facilitators' manual.

The Committee was clear to provide spiritual support for the training of one of its members at Public Conversations Project in Watertown, MA, in their Power of Dialogue workshop. Elements of that training have born fruit in the Committee's ongoing work.

The Committee submitted its responses to the Accountability Queries to Ministry Coordinating Committee in a timely way. It also approved and submitted to General Services Coordinating Committee a description of its Fund, which maintains contributions from groups outside the yearly meeting.

Heather M. Cook and Karen Reixach, co-clerks

Ministry and Pastoral Care Committee

Ministry and Pastoral Care Committee continues to focus on the support of pastoral meetings in our yearly meeting. The committee supports the New York Yearly Meeting/New England Yearly Meeting Pastors retreat in the Fall and the Pastor's and Elders retreat in the Spring. These retreats provide support and retreat time for the pastors.

The Fall pastors retreat was not held, as many pastoral meetings in both NYYM and NEYM were in transition. The committee continues to look at developing the relationship between pastors and their ministry partners, including Ministry and Counsel Committees. This year's Pastors and Elders retreat focused in part on sustaining vital ministry. This year the Spring retreat was opened to individuals who carry a concern for pastoral meetings. We added a component to this retreat of spiritual

direction, to provide spiritual support to participants in the retreat.

The committee continues to administer the Steven's Fund for superannuated ministers, pastors, and their spouses. We clarified the administration of this fund this past year. We continue to work toward efficient and clear administration of this fund.

The Intervisitation Group struggled with its mission this year. 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.

The charge of Ministry and Pastoral Care 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. These are areas that we will be addressing as we continue our work.

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* met regularly at Spring, Fall, and Summer Sessions. Once again we were joined by visitors to several of our meetings who added welcomed input to the work before us.

This year we completed our work on the new section on Electronic Communications, edited Section "G" (The Yearly Meeting) to reflect the changes that have transpired since the last revision, removed Section H, which dealt with Representative Meeting, and revised the section on making changes to our Book of Discipline. We also edited the section on Spiritual Care of Members in the section for Monthly Meeting Ministry and Counsels. We worked on a new addition, Seeking the Spirit in Creation, for the "Seeking the Spirit" part of the Faith Section. We continued our work on changes to the section on Growth and Reconciliation which we are finding challenging to accurately reflect our current condition. We also began looking

into possible changes to the section on Attenders at Meeting. This work is still in its preliminary stages as we often ran out of time before we got to this item.

Finally, the following items were brought to Ministry Coordinating Committee for their approval: the new section on Electronic Communications, changes to Sections G and H, and the revision to the statement on making changes to our Book of Discipline

The Committee to Revise *Faith and Practice* continues to be challenged by not having a confirmed recording clerk. One of our members is willing to record when he is there, but he is not able to attend all of our sessions. The notes taken by others are not always reviewed and approved by those present, which leaves the clerk responsible for pulling things together as accurately as possible. Sometimes this results in needing to go over items that were dealt with at an earlier meeting. Attempts to rectify this situation have not born fruit.

Despite its challenges, the Committee to Revise *Faith and Practice* had a productive year. Everyone at our meetings participates in the work adding his or her thinking to the discussion, thus deepening and clarifying the changes we propose to bring forward. We strive to be guided by Spirit in our work and to reflect that Light as accurately as possible.

Irma Guthrie, clerk

Spiritual Nurture Working Group

Since Summer Sessions 2015, the Spiritual Nurture Working Group (SNWG) has organized three Tending the Garden retreats at POHO and eight retreats for local meetings, worship groups and quarters. In addition, Mary Kay Glazer, formerly of Rochester meeting, traveled in the ministry in New York Yearly Meeting in April 2017 under SNWG auspices. She met with five meetings and also provided spiritual direction opportunities for attenders at the NEYM/NYYM Ministers & Elders retreat. To date SNWG has sponsored opportunities in the following quarters and regions: All Friends, Farmington-Scipio, New York, Nine Partners, Northeastern, Purchase, and Shrewsbury & Plainfield.

Additional retreats are being planned into Fall 2016. We encourage meetings to look at the retreat descriptions posted on the yearly meeting website (<http://www.nyym.org/?q=-TendingtheGarden>) as a guide to possible retreat topics, and are invited to be in touch with the SNWG co-clerks to discuss the shape of a retreat that would be right for your meeting, allowing ample time for the Working Group to discern a facilitator and set a date. Because the yearly meeting has budgeted funds in support of these retreats, meetings should not feel stopped due to lack of funds.

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 2015 Summer Sessions, the Coordinating Committee has met at Fall Sessions, the January Coordinating Committee weekend, and Spring Sessions. Minutes of our meetings are posted on the NYYM website.

We have received reports from Audit Committee and NYYM Trustees and discussed the difficulties in completing the consolidation of financial accounts (trustee and operating) and auditor reviews. Keeping track of the associated accounting costs has been challenging.

Ongoing discernment and interpretation has been part of the Trustees' good work analyzing and designating the use of NYYM trust funds. Simplification and easier accounting will eventually result. This matter and the audit-related work will continue to receive attention, and further reports will be presented at Summer Sessions.

Consult the Annual Reports (published in the *Yearbook*) from each of the committees in the General Services section to see summaries of their work. The Coordinating Committee has reviewed the grant applications for yearly support by Friends Foundation for the Aging of the ARCH program and the Shoemaker Fund's initial program support for the new Children and Youth Field Secretary position.

We received and approved updates in NYYM *Handbook* entry for Sessions Committee, and shared ideas about proposed new ways of financing attendance at Summer Sessions.

Along with the other Coordinating Committee clerks I serve on the Liaison Committee, which meets monthly by telephone and in an expanded format at Summer Sessions.

John Cooley, clerk

Audit Committee

The primary responsibility of the Audit Committee is to assure that an annual audit of Treasurer-Managed and Trustee Accounts is performed in a timely fashion, to review these audit

results and recommendations, and to assure that recommended bookkeeping adjustments are made in a timely fashion. During Fall, 2015 and Spring 2016, members of the Audit Committee (including the Liaison member from the Trustees) worked to transition the audit process from the previous separate audits of Trustee and Treasurer-Managed Accounts, to a single audit of a single Consolidated Financial Statement, and to move the audit from a traditional audit format to the newer and more rigorous GAAP-compliant (GAAP = Generally Accepted Accounting Principles) format. These actions were initiated for the 2014 NYYM Financial Statements, and our bookkeepers (DSJ) were engaged to create a single 2014 Consolidated Financial Statement that would be consistent with GAAP Standards.

Since it was known that NYYM's first consolidated statement would not be fully in conformance with GAAP, our new auditor, O'Connor Davies PKF, was engaged to perform a "review" of the 2014 draft Consolidated Financial Statement, which is an informal style of audit that will identify our primary conformance issues, without going into the depth of a full formal audit. This process should be completed by the time of 2016 Summer Sessions, and the Audit Committee will review and act on the auditor's management recommendations. It is anticipated that the development of the 2015 NYYM Consolidated Financial Statement will be initiated at that time.

The time and cost to create and to review the 2014 Consolidated Financial Statement exceeded initial estimates. In addition, GAAP compliance will require that future budgets include the cost of the current-year financial statement compilation and audit in the current-year budget, instead of the cost of the current-year financial statement and prior-year audit, as has been the case until this time. This one-year shift will require a one-time additional audit cost, which had not been anticipated. General Services Committee, the Trustees, and the gathered body at Spring Sessions 2016 raised several questions concerning these costs. It was decided to remain with the existing budgeting and ("modified accrual") cost accounting methods until the increased costs could be properly reviewed and justified, and until a plan for accommodating the GAAP-required budgeting practice could be developed. These steps are being

completed at the time of this report, and will be presented to General Services Coordinating Committee (GSCC) as a procedure is developed.

The Audit Committee will have held approximately six teleconferences during 2015–2016, and one in-person meeting at Spring Sessions. In addition, about four teleconferences were held by NYYM representatives with DSJ in the process of preparing a consolidated financial statement. Reports of these meetings were presented to the General Services Coordinating Committee at each NYYM Session. Prior to the Review of the 2014 Consolidated Financial Statement, about six areas have been identified where NYYM process improvements will be needed in order to facilitate GAAP compliance. These improvements and the initial Review management recommendations will drive future process and procedure improvement proposals; some of these will be made by improved office and record-keeping procedures, and others will be achieved via *Handbook* or other changes to be presented to the body of the yearly meeting. At this time, none of these changes are expected to require major disruptions to the operation of the yearly meeting. In fact, the initiatives of the treasurer and Trustees over the last decade or more have now placed NYYM in a more favorable position to achieve GAAP conformance within the near future.

Tim Johnson, clerk

Communications Committee

The committee has spent time pursuing new software and a new look and feel for the NYYM website. We have spent time working on what should be part of the new website in a way that makes it a useful tool for NYYM Friends as well as for seekers. Its use as both a reference source, a repository of our work, and a tool for outreach make the process complex. One aspect of this work has been devising a look and feel for the website that will work well on desktops, tablets, and mobile devices, will be engaging, and will present more than a lot of words about Friends. To this end, we engaged experts within the yearly meeting community to work with us to develop a logo for us.

On the software front, after investigating some other options, we have decided to continue with Drupal. Drupal has a steeper

learning curve for the main user (the communications director) but has more flexibility than many of the other available options. As part of this investigation, we discussed with other yearly meetings their experiences. We also spent some time investigating the use of customer relation management software (CRM) as a way to integrate our database into the website. This could have important utility down the line, especially in easing the way to make some parts of the website password-controlled. The higher level of security available with Drupal would be especially important if we moved forward with this.

We are also preparing for Steve Davison to transition out of the communications director job and the search for a new person to fill that role.

Meanwhile, *Spark* and the *Yearbook* continue to be produced, and *Spark* continues to get good response. We are putting longer articles online, thus allowing Friends to express their views at greater length than is possible within the limits of print production.

Adam Segal-Isaacson, clerk

Development Committee

The Development Committee has functioned without a clerk for much of this year. This has hampered our ability to stay on top of the many efforts underway by the committee to raise our goal for this annual appeal. Despite that handicap, different Friends have stepped in to do what they can to raise the \$45,000 we are committed to in order to fund the growing edges of this yearly meeting. As of this writing, we have raised two thirds of that amount, and are working hard to bring home the last third.

As a committee, we are clear that part of our role is to help Friends in the yearly meeting examine our attitudes towards money, giving, and our commitment to Friends of our time, talent, and treasure. That is a long-term goal into which we feel we are just beginning to find our way. We see ourselves as working to help Friends who are excited about our growing edges find a way to support that which is vital in our community.

To this end this past year, we hosted our second annual Fall

Fundraising House Party, we have sent out the annual appeal and done follow-up with Friends who have supported the yearly meeting in the past, and most recently, we hosted our first Quakers and Business Gathering. We will be doing active fundraising at summer sessions, plan another house party for this fall, and may also possibly initiate phone-athon parties as well.

In the course of the year, we had two all-day meetings, the second one involving training in fundraising for those of us who needed it (most of us), as well as planning our work for the last few months of the 2016 appeal campaign. We have also met periodically in conference calls.

*Christopher Sammond, ex-officio member,
for the Committee*

Financial Services Committee

Financial Services Committee met to draft the 2016 Budget.

The budget is on page 63.

Committee on Expenditure of the H.H. Mosher Fund

In 2015, at our annual sessions at Silver Bay, we distributed \$3,532.70 worth of books and CDs. This included \$2,998.48 for gifts to 68 monthly meetings, worship groups, and prison worship groups, and \$242.45 for schools. We gave gift books to 16 individuals, \$291.77 (staff, recorded ministers, presenters at NYYM, and first-time visitors at our yearly meeting).

All are invited to visit the Book Table, located just inside the front door to the lobby at Silver Bay during Summer Sessions. Replenish your local meeting's library shelves with up to \$50 worth of books again this year. If your meeting is not sending a representative to Summer Sessions, please ask a neighboring meeting that is planning to send a Friend to select books for your meeting. Please consider signing up to volunteer for an hour or two to help arrange and distribute books during Summer Sessions.

Beatrice Beguin, clerk

General Secretary's Report

This past year has been a considerable challenge for me. The administrative aspect of my work has continued to grow, demanding more and more of my time. At the same time, direct ministry to meetings has continued to feel like a higher priority, both for me and for my supervisory committee. I have been sorely stretched trying to adequately cover both of these bases.

In addition to my normal administrative duties, I put considerable time this past year into developing and writing the collaborative grant proposal with New England Yearly Meeting to explore how to foster vibrant multi-generational communities. I worked with the Personnel Committee to develop the job description for the new Children and Youth Field Secretary (CYFS), and participated in the search and hire process for that position. I have then worked with Melinda Wenner Bradley, our new CYFS, to get her up to speed on the grant portion of her work, and worked extensively with Noah Baker Merrill, NEYM Yearly Meeting Secretary, and a survey specialist we hired through the grant, to develop a process to measure the effectiveness of our work to help monthly meetings better engage and retain our children, youth, and young adults. It is an exciting program, but it has required a great deal of time to launch.

I also put in considerable time exploring the financial structure whereby we might offer a "pay as led" option for Summer Sessions. This would open our sessions to Friends who have stayed away due to lack of funds or an unwillingness to seek financial support. Sessions Committee was not clear to implement those changes for this session, and will likely not do so for 2017, due to the FGC Gathering being on our turf that year, but they hope to possibly implement it in 2018.

Finally, our Development Committee has needed a lot of support and my participation, as they work to ensure that the growing edges of our yearly meeting have the financial support they need to flourish. There has not been a Friend clear to serve as clerk for much of the year, and so this crucial committee has needed more of my time than it would otherwise.

All these, added to normal administrative duties, have drawn heavily on my time and energy, competing for time I might use to visit meetings and to lead workshops and retreats. My super-

visory committee and I both see the latter as a greater priority, and we have been working together to modify my work plan to make my job more tenable. I also met, along with the associate secretary, Helen Garay Toppins, with a Friend gifted in staffing structure, organization, and time management, to see how we might trim our work to a more manageable level, as both of our jobs had grown to the point that we felt stretched way too thin.

This increase in our workload is due not only to an increase in certain administrative demands, but also to a heartening upwelling of vibrant ministry that responds to the needs outlined in the Statement of Leadings and Priorities. As the yearly meeting as a whole begins to take up that work, there are more and more demands on staff time to help support and implement it. This is a very good problem to have.

This past year I visited sixteen meetings and worship groups, and brought some sort of program to eleven of them. For five of those visits, I led a retreat or workshop. One of these was a spiritual nurture workshop for a prison worship group, the first I have done "on the inside." That was a wonderful blessing. I continue to see visitation as the most valuable work that I do. Of that work, I find the programs I offer meetings are the most beneficial to a meeting, but even just visiting a meeting builds bridges and connections which are truly important.

I put a lot of energy into supporting the Tending the Garden series, working on the Spiritual Nurture Working Group to help plan those retreats happening at Powell House, and working to support and sometimes lead those retreats happening at monthly meetings. I consider the work of corporate spiritual formation to be crucial work for our meetings, making them spiritually vibrant, a place of nurture for those already there, and more attractive for seekers coming in the door. I also led one of the retreats in the series held at Powell House, *From Seed to Flower: Nurturing Tender New Growth of the Light Within*. That was a blessing as well, nurturing Friends from across the yearly meeting, and knowing that they will in turn nurture others.

I have spent time supporting the growing energy in the yearly meeting around outreach, working with the Friends who are starting the Outreach Working Group. I also spent a weekend at Woolman Hill at the Emerging Practices in Quaker Outreach, a

gathering exploring what it means to be a collaborative community of practice, as Friends from several yearly meetings, including ours, shared their experiments and growing edges.

As one of our representatives to the Friends United Meeting General Board, I attended board meetings and also two iterations of Stoking the Fire, an annual retreat designed to support and encourage ministry in North America. I have finally rotated off from the role of clerk of North American Ministries, after years in that service. The board has been clear to restructure that committee so that it now includes more Friends, and Friends who are not general secretaries or superintendents. That committee is now moving onto solid footing, and after years of work, a genuine North American ministry seems to be emerging.

In addition to attending Spring, Summer, and Fall Sessions, I offered varying levels of support for, and participated in, the winter Meetings for Discernment gathering, Quaker Spring, the Northeast Regional Christ-centered Friends Gathering, the annual Superintendents and Secretaries retreat, the NYYM/ NEYM Pastors Retreat, and the White Privilege Conference. As an ex-officio member of the Development and Financial Services Committees, I helped plan and support Budget Saturday, the (now annual) Fall Fundraiser House Party, and the Quakers and Business gathering.

It is exciting to witness the new growth and energy in this yearly meeting, and wonderful to be a part of supporting that. It is heartening to see Friends addressing the needs of our constituent meetings and also bearing witness to the need for radical change in our nation and our world. I feel privileged to be a part of what is happening with us as a community, and grateful to be able to serve in this ministry.

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 proceeds of the endowment received at the end of 2015. As of this year the funds for the New York Female Association (of New York Quarterly Meeting) will no longer appear in our report, since that endowment has appropriately been separated from Lindley Murray Fund accounting and set up as an independent Fund to continue its intended purpose.

Applications for programs from each of the organizations were evaluated with respect to how they fit the mission of the Lindley Murray Fund: (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; and (4) to assist and relieve the poor in any description and in any manner that may be judged proper. The trustees also take into consideration the use of the previous year's grants (all of the applications came from organizations that had received grants last year). We also paid attention to evidence of good business practice and accounting.

Awards were made as follows, by organization:

| | |
|---------------------------|------------------|
| AFSC | \$ 2,600 |
| AVP-NY | 1,450 |
| Amerinda | 1,500 |
| Creative Response... | 1,000 |
| FCNL | 2,000 |
| FGC | 3,900 |
| <i>Friends Journal</i> | 2,700 |
| Indian Affairs Committee. | 1,450 |
| LI Council/Churches | 1,800 |
| Oakwood School | 6,000 |
| Powell House | 2,750 |
| Redemption Center | 1,200 |
| YSOP | <u>1,790</u> |
| Total | \$ 30,140 |

Trustees also discussed their own charge with questions such as these:

- How do we best manage use of the Fund? Should we continue to act as trustees or change to a “committee for the use of the Fund”? Would terms of appointment change? No change is expected in the near future.
- Can the Fund eventually be merged with other trust funds of New York Yearly Meeting to consolidate overlapping support of similar projects from different sources, such as the Sharing Fund and other presently restricted funds?
- Do we get “more bang for the buck” by funding smaller projects? We did not reach out for new applications this year.
- How can we best keep the focus on the intent of the grantors?

John Cooley, convener

Nominating Committee

Our report is very short this year. Our sentiments are much the same as last year. Nominating Committee work is hard and necessary. It is also rewarding. And we need more people to do it with us.

Making connections with Friends that we may not know or know well now, encouraging them to discern their leadings and to share their gifts with the body of the yearly meeting, seeing something in someone who has not yet seen it herself, exploring what is needed to help our committees keep working in the Spirit—these are some of the rewards of our work. Yes, we make many phone calls, send many emails, wait sometimes in vain for responses. But our yearly meeting needs this work and it will be done better and more easily if we have a full Nominating Committee.

We meet during one of the committee times at Fall and Spring Sessions and every day at Summer Sessions. We have a few conference call meetings between November and June. Most of the work is done by each of us on our own but the committee as a whole is available for discernment, support, and some laughter.

Please join us. If you really can't, please help your region find the right Friends to join us. We need you as soon as you can jump in.

Elaine Learnard & Deborah Wood, co-clerks

Personnel Committee

Personnel Committee has been meeting on a regular basis. Our work together involves the yearly evaluation of staff and an ongoing review of policies and procedures in relation to staff of the yearly meeting. We have spent time reviewing the benefits offered to staff and clarifying our policies in relation to benefits. This year we have had liaisons to both the Supervisory Committee for the general secretary and the ARCH staff. In this way, Personnel Committee is able to coordinate our work with the work of other committees that interact with staff.

We have spent considerable time working on the creation and funding for a Child and Youth Field Secretary. In conjunction with that work, some of us have met with and collaborated with the Youth Committee to develop a shared vision for the position. We are currently seeking support for the possible position from the Trustees and a grant from the Shoemaker Fund.

Barbara Menzel, clerk

Yearly Meeting Staff Reports

ARCH Staff

We anticipated that this would be a year of change, and it has not disappointed. ARCH co-founder Barbara Spring retired at the end of 2016. Co-founder Anita Paul has transitioned into her new role as ARCH Specialist, continuing her work with outreach, mentorship, workshop & ARCH Visitor training facilitation, and aging consultations. I have stepped into a new Director role, and have taken on the work of administering our program as I continue to offer consultations, resource coordination, and nurture and support for our network of volunteer Visitors. I am also thrilled to have hired five additional part-time Local Coordinators to serve our aging concerns closer to where we live:

- Kathy Slattery & Bronwyn Mohlke – Farmington Scipio
- Martha Gurvich – Purchase
- Abby Burford – New Jersey
- Mahayana (Yana) Landowne – New York City

These Friends each bring special experience with our ARCH program and other areas of aging related expertise to their spirit-led work.

Quaker Values and End of Life Decision Making Workbook. We are delighted to have published our first workbook to help us facilitate our essential end of life conversations and arrangements. This beautifully designed and thoughtfully written workbook has been warmly received by Friends from all over our yearly meeting and beyond. These are an important source of additional funding for our program, and Friends have generously been making donations to take them home with them. Friends can contact me to schedule a workshop to introduce the workbook to your meeting, or to order additional copies.

Visitor Network. The core of our program is our network of over 120 volunteer Visitors. This year those Visitors organized and facilitated workshops, visited with Friends in the hospital, reconnected with homebound Friends, organized intergenerational events, facilitated group conversations on aging and end of life, and much more. Your ARCH staff supports this work by organizing the initial training for Visitors, offering individual support and referrals to Visitors, and providing opportunities for further enrichment and training.

Visitor Training. Two ARCH Visitor Trainings were held this year for Friends in Ocean Grove, New Jersey, and at Stony Point Center in the lower Hudson Valley, adding 20 more Friends to our ARCH Visitor network. We welcome their courage, curiosity, spirit, and diverse life experience to our vibrant ministry of care. Our next Visitor Training is planned for October of 2016 at Rochester Meeting.

Workshops. Increasingly Friends express concern for their “graying” meetings. The ARCH program supports meeting groups in many ways, but particularly through offering workshop opportunities on End of Life Planning, Housing in Later Life, The Testimony of Community, and many more. Workshops are

facilitated by ARCH Staff and Visitors and are often tailored to meet a particular group’s interests or needs. Workshops are a great way to get Friends talking and worshiping about aging concerns with each other, and often lead to deepening intimacy, healing, and personal growth among Friends who attend and the wider body of the meeting.

Outreach. ARCH is becoming a model for providing care and support to aging Friends beyond our yearly meeting. This winter Anita supported New England Yearly Meeting’s first training for their SAGE (Support Across Generations for the Elderly) program.

Aging in Prison. The Committee on Aging Concerns continues its stewardship of our ministry with aging incarcerated Friends. We have compiled a list of ARCH Visitors who are interested in making visits in prison visiting rooms and our idea is to match those Visitors with outside Friends who are experienced with the prison visiting room experience and have relationships with incarcerated Friends. We continue to look for new ways to support the aging process of incarcerated Friends.

Funding our ministry. Until 2015 our program was supported completely by a grant from the Friends Foundation for the Aging. Last year we raised additional funds to meet our planned budget. Our program continues to grow and the donations of meetings, regional meetings, individual members of our ARCH network, and the individuals who are touched by our ministry are the soil that nourish and sustain us in that growth. Please consider making a gift to the ARCH program!

Your ARCH staff gratefully serves our whole body, at every age, and rounds out a team of NYYM staff that brings expertise, energy, and spirit to our work with our members and attenders ages 0-103. The ARCH program is grateful to the Committee on Aging Concerns, whose oversight and eldership ministry is our essential link to the yearly meeting organization, and whose report is on page 117. I continue in gratitude and with awe for this incredible work you share with me.

Callie Janoff, Director, for the ARCH Staff

Gabrielle Savory Bailey, Young Adult Field Secretary

No report submitted

Melinda Wenner Bradley, Children and Youth Field Secretary

The creation of the Children and Youth Field Secretary position presents an exciting opportunity to serve children, families and meetings in New York Yearly Meeting and support the work of becoming one spiritual community of all ages. In the first few weeks in the position, my time has been spent in communication with staff and Friends in the yearly meeting as we begin work on new projects and connect around existing programs.

I participated in planning and attended the 2016 Youth Institute at Powell House. My collegial relationship with Chris DeRoller and Mike Clark is a valuable collaboration and one I look forward to building on.

Two boxes of the FGC religious education curriculum “Sparkling Still” are in my office, waiting to be distributed to monthly meetings on visits and at Summer Sessions. I’ve visited with members of one monthly meeting at their request and consulted by phone and email with others, as well as making travel plans in the coming months. Much of my time has been spent on launching the Monthly Meeting Partners Project, including developing the plans for identifying partner meetings and coordinating this work with other staff, particularly Young Adult Field Secretary Gabi Savory-Bailey.

As this illustrates, I am excited about how we build networks and lift up the many gifts among yearly meeting Friends. I view spiritual formation as a ministry that our Religious Society can be more intentional in supporting. Partnership with other ministries in the yearly meeting community, and between meetings and families, is vital for welcome and inclusion—and for young people to grow to be the Quakers the world needs. Developing, identifying, and sharing resources is only a start to this work. I look forward to continuing to travel and meet with Friends as we partner in building a beloved multigenerational community.

Steven Davison, Communications Director

This is my final report as a New York Yearly Meeting staff member, and so I write with a deep sense of gratitude and with no small amount of sadness. One of the great blessings of my life has been that I have gone from a job I liked to one I liked even better each time. Now as I retire, I leave my last full-time job and the best one of all.

I have loved serving the yearly meeting for the past four years. I have loved being part of your deeply gifted staff. I have loved sharing the life of the Spirit with you my fellow travelers in the Quaker way.

And it’s been an eventful year, mainly because of the website. Our new website is under development as I write and we plan to launch in time for Summer Sessions 2016, although we will still have a lot of content to move from the current site to the new one.

The new website is configured specifically for mobile devices. It will have a new look and feel and a new kind of organization. It will be more accessible and functional for our committees to use and it will improve the meeting websites that we host. And it will have a system for navigation that will make it easier to find what you’re looking for.

We also will be rolling out a new logo for the yearly meeting as a parallel project to the new website.

I have continued to add new content to the site, as well. This includes:

- pages in the Resources for Meetings section for the staff that describe what each staff member can do for local Friends and local meetings;
- a new Spiritual Life section that offers resources for spiritual nurture;
- a new Supporting NYYM section that offers information, resources, and encouragement on yearly meeting finances and development, which will go live with the new website; and
- a new Community Life section and other new pages that also will be published with the new website.

My other main focus has been the development of a communications manual for the yearly meeting, an operating manual for your new communications director.

In the meantime, I have continued to put out our usual publications, *Spark*, *InfoShare*, the *Annual Report*, and the *Yearbook*. This year's themes for *Spark* were

- Quakers and Other Faiths, Part Two (September 2015, carried over from March);
- Spiritual Formation (November 2015);
- Spirit at Work in New York Yearly Meeting (January 2016);
- Family-Friendly Meetings (March 2016); and
- Conversations on Racism (May 2016).

It has been a privilege to edit *Spark*. I feel it's a very valuable vehicle for the written ministry of Friends in the yearly meeting, pretty consistently offering substantive contributions to the Quaker tradition and spiritual nurture to its readers. My thanks to all the authors I've been blessed to work with over the years and to the guest editors who have helped enrich its contents. And doesn't it look great in color!

I also began a project of reviewing all our local meeting's websites, with an eye to insuring that we all have a decent web presence. A decent website is already the most important outreach tool that we have and a useful and accessible web presence will only become even more important in the future. Web searches are how our new members are most likely to find us and it's really important that there's a there there for them to find. This is a long-term project that must continue after I leave.

Meanwhile, several meetings have lost their domain names and hosting services over the past year because the contract lapsed without their knowledge. Therefore, I have started another initiative to insure that local meetings have a solid grasp of their digital accounts. Your meeting will soon receive a form to fill out that will organize and centralize this information for yourselves and share it with the yearly meeting as a backup.

I established Google for Nonprofit status for the yearly meeting, which will bring us benefits that we have yet to really tap. At the least, we will be changing our email service and begin experimenting with Google Ads as an outreach tool.

I have acquired a Go To Meeting account for the yearly meeting. Go To Meeting is a collaboration platform that will allow groups in the yearly meeting organizing around a concern, whether as a committee or working group or other informal group, to meet via videoconference, with file sharing, screen sharing, and other tools for sharing and organizing their work together. If your committee, working group, or other informal group would like to use this tool to further your work together, contact the yearly meeting office.

I plan to attend Summer Sessions this year, though not as a staff member. I hope I get a chance to say goodbye to each of you personally. But here let me say, thank you for the opportunity to serve you, to worship with you, and to share the beautiful fellowship that is New York Yearly Meeting.

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. These records are the basis for compiling registration lists for the various yearly meeting sessions (Spring, Summer, Fall), as well as Meetings for Discernment and other events. The mailing lists for *Spark* and the Sharing Fund appeals are also generated from this information, as well as the global email list for those interested in NYYM news and *InfoShare*.

Our monthly meeting recorders are the backbone of our database. They keep us up to date with information about new

members, births, transfers, deaths, and they provide the statistics about their meetings that appear in each NYYM *Yearbook*. Once a year each recorder receives a printout of their meeting's members, which they compare with their records for accuracy. I organize the announcements about our membership that appear in *Spark*.

I work with my supervisor, Helen Garay Toppins, on NYYM finances, processing payment vouchers, reviewing bank statements, preparing bank deposits, and sending out acknowledgements for contributions to the Sharing and Equalization Funds. We also now track monetary contributions in the database. In addition, this year we prepared for an audit by a new accounting firm.

I work on both the Alphabetical and Committee sections of the *Yearbook*. I collect the Epistles, State of Society Reports, and memorial minutes that are made available at Summer Sessions.

Routine tasks include answering the telephone, reviewing/responding to email, opening mail, ordering office supplies, and shipping out copies of *Faith and Practice* and NYYM *Yearbooks*.

Helen Garay Toppins, Associate Secretary

25 Years and Counting

This year marks my 25th year working for New York Yearly Meeting. There were times when it seemed as if the years were creeping by. At other times it seems as if a quarter of a century flew by in the blink of an eye. I consider myself very fortunate for being able to continue to work in a job that I truly love. It's a people job. A vocation that lands me behind prison walls and in front of meetinghouses. It's a combination of administration, supervision, nurture, advancement and outreach. What keeps me on point throughout it all is the help and support that I receive from my staff colleagues, countless NYYM volunteers, and countless F(f)riends.

Records Committee

No report submitted

Sessions Committee

If I had to describe the past year's work of Sessions Committee with one word, that word would be—streamlining. Last summer, we approved streamlining our Spring/Fall Sessions Subcommittee and having instead a Spring/Fall Sessions Liaison. She works with our host regions, using the streamlined *Spring/Fall Sessions Handbook* as a springboard. We created an all-sessions-in-one medical form for our youth programs and approved an all-sessions-in-one fundraising policy. All of these documents can be found online.

We are extremely grateful for the work of our host regions and we continue to look for ways to streamline the process of creating our Spring and Fall Sessions. Fall Sessions 2015 was hosted by Northeast Regional Meeting using the time-tested Doane Stuart School and our own Powell House, and over 127 Friends participated. Spring Sessions 2016 was hosted by Shrewsbury-Plainfield Half-Yearly Meeting in a space new to us—the First Baptist Church of Lincoln Gardens—and in the ever-welcoming Plainfield Meetinghouse. More than 150 Friends attended.

We continue to hold Summer Sessions at Silver Bay Association while we research spaces that can accommodate a conference as large as ours. Oddly, one of the most limiting factors to finding alternate sites is the need for an auditorium that seats 400 to 500. We gather as a community often enough over the week that using a site that can only seat 160 people at a time obviously does not work. At the same time, holding our meetings for worship in a cavernous gymnasium does not seem appropriate. Feel free to recommend a location to our committee! The search is ongoing.

Sessions Committee is also considered a “nuts and bolts” committee, planning the logistics of the yearly meeting gatherings. Our work is often fairly dry and straightforward—reserving sessions venues, planning the detailed schedules, gathering meeting statistics—yet our work is grounded in our love of and dedication to our yearly meeting and its members. We are Friends first and organizers second!

Melanie-Claire Mallison, clerk

Supervisory Committee for the General Secretary

The Supervisory Committee for the General Secretary is charged with guiding and supervising the general secretary in his work serving the yearly meeting. In practice, this means working with Christopher Sammond to set detailed goals for each year, to check on progress toward each of those goals, and to evaluate his work at the end of the year. Sometimes the committee meets in executive session without Christopher; more often he participates in our discussions. Our main focus in 2015–2016 has to examine the size and scope of the job of general secretary, with the goal of finding a way to fit it inside a 40-hour work week. We have worked closely with Christopher to understand his experience of being general secretary, his sense of how his assigned responsibilities do or do not serve the yearly meeting, and how anyone can stay spiritually alive and centered while being pulled in so many different directions. This is very much an open question and is likely to lead to a redefinition of the general secretary's position.

Karen Way, clerk

NYYM Trustees

The yearly meeting's bylaws 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 2015-2016, Trustees continued efforts to enhance transparency and accountability in the yearly meeting's business affairs. Trustees met six times, including a full-day retreat, and twice more by conference call. Our activities included the following:

- We completed the process of developing new bylaws for the Corporation and presented them for approval by the body (Minute 2015-11-11).
- We continued our efforts to simplify, rationalize, and harmonize management of bequests and trusts received by the yearly meeting. We worked with recipients of bequest/trust monies to assure that funds are being utilized in the manner intended by donors. We continued to review how

bequest/trust monies are allocated with an emphasis on distributing dividends to the Operating Account wherever possible so that allocation decisions can be discerned by the body through the budgeting process. We discussed combining administration of trust funds with the trustees of Lindley Murray Fund.

- We worked with Generals Services Coordinating Committee and the Audit Committee on managing the current audit of the yearly meeting's financial records and operations, and on investigating and resolving issues relating to the yearly meeting audits and financial reviews.
- Trustees oversee real properties owned by the yearly meeting, including former meetinghouses and cemeteries of laid down meetings. We are exploring possibilities to dispose of those properties that are not used by Friends. We resolved to accept a former meetinghouse property in Plattekill, New York (Nine Partners Quarter) from the Huguenot Historical Society and are pursuing the necessary legal steps to complete the transaction.
- We managed certain business concerns of the yearly meeting, such as insurance coverage, and we continued to hone the yearly meeting's financial guidelines and worked on developing financial controls guidelines. We arranged to have Trustees materials included on the yearly meeting's website. We began participating in Liaison Committee conference calls to better keep yearly meeting leadership apprised of Trustees' activities.

At December 31, 2015, assets under the care of Trustees totaled \$5,403,129, all of which are invested through Friends Fiduciary Corporation (FFC). In recent years, FFC has been reducing its dividend or distribution rate. The rate was 4.5% in 2014 and 2015. It has been reduced to 4.25% for 2016 and will drop to 4.0% in 2017. All of the 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, 2015 is available on the NYYM website and is set forth below.

Frederick Dettmer, clerk

| Regularly Distributed Funds | YE 2016 Value | 2016 Distribution |
|--|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| NYYM Operating Budget | | |
| Cheeseman Memorial | \$ 17,175 | \$883.15 |
| Helene E. Kenmore | 27,229 | 1,400.12 |
| Stamford-Greenwich | 98,910 | 4,934.11 |
| Treasurer's | 229,247 | 11,787.96 |
| Total | \$ 372,560 | \$19,005.34 |
| Advancement Committee Funds | | |
| Martin Leach | \$68,698 | 3,532.50 |
| Women's | 10,305 | 529.90 |
| Total | \$79,003 | \$4,062.40 |
| Indian Affairs (sub-fund in Sharing Fund) | | |
| Enzo Ferrante | \$11,830 | 608.29 |
| Levinus Painter Scholarship | 7,773 | 399.69 |
| Mae D. Barton | \$67,393 | \$3,465.39 |
| Total | \$ 86,996 | \$4,473.37 |
| Mosher Committee | | |
| Henry H. Mosher | \$ 89,995 | \$4,627.60 |
| World Ministries (sub-fund in Sharing Fund) | | |
| Agnes Lawrence | \$ 199,226 | 2,868.39 |
| Dikran B. Donchian Mission | 103,048 | 5,298.75 |
| Ella J. Chapman | 48,089 | 2,472.75 |
| Ellen Collins Missionary | 68,698 | 3,532.50 |
| Ellen L. Congdon | 27,479 | 0.00 |
| Loder Chapel | 6,870 | 353.25 |
| Mary F. Thomas | 12,366 | 635.85 |
| Smyrna Meeting | 4,948 | 254.34 |
| Sutton-Haviland | \$ 3,435 | \$176.65 |
| Total | \$ 474,157 | \$15,592.43 |

| Fund | YE 2016 Value | 2016 Distribution |
|---|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| Powell House | | |
| Ella L. Burdge | \$57,260 | \$2,944.33 |
| Emma Cheeseman Bruns | 122,008 | 6,273.72 |
| Maria W. Barton | 88,758 | 4,563.99 |
| Total | \$268,027 | \$13,782.04 |
| Friends Historical Library | | |
| Irving B. Rymph | \$133,619 | \$6,870.72 |
| John B. Cox Memorial | 23,371 | 1,201.75 |
| Total | \$156,99 | \$8,072.47 |
| Manasquan Monthly Meeting | | |
| Ella J. Burdge | \$57,260 | \$2,944.33 |
| Oakwood Scholarship | | |
| Dikran B. Donchian | \$34,349 | \$1,766.25 |
| Educational | 169,685 | 8,725.30 |
| George H. Carpenter | 157,938 | 8,121.21 |
| Henry Y. Ostrander | 13,328 | 685.33 |
| High Point | 83,263 | 4,281.39 |
| Lotta Merrill Scholarship | 15,595 | 801.87 |
| Simeon Loder | 79,003 | 4,062.40 |
| Total | \$553,160 | \$28,443.75 |
| Oakwood Administrative | | |
| Edward B. Underhill | \$3,435 | \$176.65 |
| Ellen Collins | 103,048 | 5,298.75 |
| Grace & Freeman Shepherd | 68,011 | 3,497.20 |
| John G. Lane | 686,985 | 35,325.00 |
| Loder-Clark | 34,349 | 1,766.25 |
| Oakwood Endowment | 68,698 | 3,532.50 |
| Oakwood Biblical | 5,496 | 282.60 |
| Skaneateles | 27,479 | 1,413.00 |
| Slocum Howland | 68,698 | 3,532.50 |
| Total | \$1,066,200 | \$54,824.45 |
| Friends Foundation for the Aging | | |
| Margaret B. Dietrich | \$116,238 | \$5,976.99 |

| Fund | YE 2016 Value | 2016 Distribution |
|--|--------------------|----------------------|
| Nine Partners Quarterly Meeting | | |
| Albert B. Merritt | \$6,389 | \$328.53 |
| Highland Mills | 6,114 | 314.40 |
| Milton Meeting | 25,968 | 1,335.31 |
| Magill | 2,606 | 133.97 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>\$41,077</i> | <i>\$2,112.21</i> |
| Total Regularly Distributed | \$3,361,663 | \$163,917.43 |

DIVIDENDS HELD PENDING REQUESTS (Retained Income Funds)

| Fund | YE 2016 Value | 2016 Distribution | Retained Income |
|--|--------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Donor Restricted Requested by Named Approvers | | | |
| Brinkerhoff | \$16,762 | \$300.00 | \$601.41 |
| Lindley Murray | 790,962 | 32,351.00 | 32,584.56 |
| Lockport | 19,328 | 900.00 | 611.30 |
| Mahlon York | 231,308 | 9,510.00 | 7,147.42 |
| Sharing Endowment | 516,941 | 38,886.36 | 0.00 |
| Stevens | 145,772 | 6,000.00 | 13,510.82 |
| Sufferings | 22,583 | 0.00 | 12,218.68 |
| Total Named Approvers | \$1,743,656 | \$87,947.36 | \$66,674.20 |
| Donor Restricted Approved by Trustees | | | |
| Caleb Sutton | \$7,626 | \$0.00 | \$1,622.94 |
| Jesse P. Haines | 38,209 | 2,500.00 | 2,965.30 |
| Morris Cemetery | 14,099 | 0.00 | 19,186.32 |
| Nathaniel Smith | 15,114 | 0.00 | 1,399.75 |
| Sophia M. Beers | 6,181 | 750.00 | 389.53 |
| Total Trustee Approved | \$81,229 | \$3,250.00 | \$25,563.83 |

| Fund | YE 2016 Value | 2016 Distribution | Retained Income |
|--|--------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| Approved by Trustees with No Donor Restrictions | | | |
| Edward Underhill-Yorktown | \$23,836 | \$0.00 | \$5,048.16 |
| Florence Stevens | 137,704 | 9,000.00 | 17,544.54 |
| General Fund | 13,828 | 0.00 | 6,475.32 |
| Monkton Ridge | 41,212 | 783.00 | 15,037.24 |
| Total Unrestricted | \$216,581 | \$9,783.50 | \$44,105.26 |
| Total Retained Income | \$2,041,465 | \$100,980.86 | \$145,132.15 |
| TOTAL NYYM FUNDS | \$5,403,129 | | |

| Trust Expense | 2016 Disbursed | Ending Balance |
|------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Trustee Administration | \$10,051.85 | 579.11 |

NURTURE SECTION

Nurture Coordinating Committee

The main focus of Nurture Coordinating Committee's (NCC) efforts this year were in response to the minute from Brooklyn Meeting asking New York Yearly Meeting to reconsider its financial support of Friends United Meeting (FUM), as the personnel policy discriminating against non-celibate LGBTQ volunteers and staff remains in place. New York Quarterly Meeting endorsed the Brooklyn minute in July 2015. In the fall, a letter with some background documentation was sent to monthly meetings asking for their response to this concern. A number of monthly meetings responded, but nowhere near the number needed to provide a considered yearly meeting response. A follow-up letter has been distributed with more background information, and links to the NYYM website for further information about FUM programs and ministry. NCC plans to have an interim report for Summer Sessions 2016.

A day-long retreat on the theme of Integrating Children into the Spiritual Life of the Meeting was held at Brooklyn Meeting in March. It was well attended by both children and adults. The co-facilitators were Melinda Wenner Bradley and Mary Harpster.

At Spring Sessions 2016, Melinda was hired as part-time Children and Youth Field Secretary. She will be a wonderful resource. She will be working closely with two monthly meetings each year for the next three years to help Friends bring children into the spiritual life of those meetings.

Young Adult Concerns Committee has become very active, and they are planning a Quaker Party for Friends who grew up as Quakers in a meeting, but who have moved away and are looking for renewed connection with Friends. While Gabi Savory Bailey was on leave, two young adult Friends stepped up to continue Gabi's ministry of supporting and nurturing that age group.

Powell House again hosted a Youth Institute in April. Melinda attended, and did an introductory workshop on Faith & Play. Junior Yearly Meeting Committee invited teen clerks to join

the youth institute this year. Two workshops were specifically designed to increase the young clerks' understanding of Quaker business process and to practice clerking skills. The teens then participated in the larger plenary sessions focused on beliefs important to them, what's working in youth programming, ways to increase multigenerational participation in meeting life, spiritual mentors in their own lives, and ways meetings can support transitions.

Powell House continues to engage youth in developing their faith and to address needs of families and young adults with multigenerational retreats, parenting weekends, young adult and older teen mixed retreats, leadership training for teens, and opportunities to facilitate and support youth retreats for parents and young adults. This year, the Powell House Youth Program also took 12 youth to the White Privilege Conference in Philadelphia. A copy of that report is on the NYYM website, and available from the clerk of NCC or the Powell House Youth Directors.

The list of Resource Library materials still needs to be made available on the NYYM website, and the materials still need to find a permanent home where Friends will have access to these books.

The Nurture Section web page has received a number of additions in the past year. Committee pages have also been somewhat updated, although that work is still in progress.

Programming for children and youth at Spring and Fall Sessions still needs attention. NCC is working with Sessions Committee to make clear the preplanning process, and is working with JYM and Youth Committees to provide guidance for that process.

Two of our yearly meeting bodies are in leadership transition. Ann Davidson will be retiring from Powell House at the end of June 2016. Regina Baird Haag and her husband Dennis have been approved as co-directors of Powell House beginning this summer. Regina had been pastor at Adirondack Meeting for a number of years. Peter Baily, Head of Oakwood Friends School, left that position on June 30, 2015. Chad Cianfrani, faculty member and administrator, agreed to serve as Interim Head for the school year 2015-2016. Following a nationwide search for a

new Head, Chad was chosen for the position. He plans to attend Summer Sessions so Friends will have the opportunity to meet him then.

Deborah Wood, clerk

Committee on Aging Concerns

The primary responsibility of the Committee on Aging Concerns is to oversee the ARCH program, which is described in more detail by Callie Janoff, ARCH director, on p. 99.

Our work includes planning, staff oversight, and support, financial oversight, and serving as elders at trainings and other ministry. The Committee continues to meet at NYYM's Fall, Spring, and Summer Sessions, at a 1-1/2 day September retreat, and on frequent conference calls.

It has been a joy to see plans laid several years ago unfold so well and to see the program spread to all corners of New York Yearly Meeting. At Summer Sessions last year we invited all Silver Bay attendees to help us celebrate the enormous contributions of Barbara Spring, who would be retiring as an ARCH coordinator at the end of 2015, and to welcome Callie Janoff in her new role as director of the program. We were delighted by the enthusiasm shown by the many celebrants and the kind words shared by several, including Deb Frazer, executive director of the Friends Foundation for the Aging, ARCH's primary funder.

ARCH Specialist, Anita Paul, is continuing to do consultations, training, and mentoring. Five Local Coordinators have been hired from among our many trained Visitors to help extend ARCH's reach throughout the large NYYM landscape.

Committee members are active in oversight, support, and resource development. Charlene Ray is now providing the primary financial oversight and Lyle Jenks, Carol Summar, and I are Callie's supervisory committee. All Committee members are actively seeking resources that can strengthen ARCH as it continues to support both graying Quakers and graying meetings. We thank the many individuals and meetings who have already lent their support.

Dare Thompson, clerk

Epistle Committee

The Epistle of the yearly meeting appears in the Yearbook

Friends General Conference representatives

No report submitted

Friends United Meeting Representatives

Friends United Meeting continues to grow and change. One of the most profound changes has been the organization living into its aspiration to be a genuine global partnership, after many generations of being more of a mission organization, with many of the patriarchal and colonialist overtones common to mission organizations located in the United States.

This year the General Board—North America will meet in Cuba Yearly Meeting for the first time, strengthening ties maintained by NEYM and the rest of FUM for many years. Thirty-three Friends from North America (one from New York Yearly Meeting) will join Friends from Cuba and a few from Jamaica and East Africa to do the work of Friends United Meeting, and to foster the community FUM seeks to be. Three years ago the board met in Jamaica Yearly Meeting, and every three years, many on the North American branch of the board travel to Kenya to meet in conjunction with the General Board—East Africa.

The fact that North American Friends have had most of the financial resources has until recently shaped how Friends across the globe have viewed their role, and the role of North American Friends, making it difficult to escape the patron/client way of understanding our relationships. Moving the board meetings to constituent yearly meetings off the North American continent has helped to alter this dynamic, as have the efforts by Colin Saxton, FUM General Secretary, and the General Board to genuinely invite Caribbean and African Friends to step up to the plate and share their many gifts. We are moving towards becoming a global spiritual community that also does work together in projects in East Africa, the Caribbean, and Palestine. This shift has allowed a profound change in tone in the workings of FUM.

The board continues to function well, and in a good spirit.

Most notable are the initiation of an expanded mission in Belize, the reorganization and revitalization of North American Ministries, and a sizeable capital campaign. All of these mark a movement away from legacy projects, many of which FUM has supported for generations, and an openness to be faithful to new leadings and work.

In Belize, FUM has supported a small school for at-risk youth in an extremely poor and violent part of Belize City. We are adding to that existing ministry the forming of a church to anchor a community devoted to an alternative to the rampant violence in the neighborhood. (Over 90% of the children in that area have directly experienced violence.) Part of that effort will be to create an AVP program there, partly funded by NYYM. We also hope to triple the size of the school.

One of the clearest and loudest calls that came out of the discernment after the **40 Days of Prayer** process was the crying need for a renewed North American Ministries. For a very long time, virtually the whole focus of FUM has been overseas mission projects. Churches and meetings across the continent have been asking for support and help with renewal. The North American Ministries Committee (NAM) has been changed from a body formed exclusively of General Superintendents and General Secretaries to one that is mostly made up of Friends who carry a concern for the spiritual health of our meetings and churches, and who have more time and energy available than the named leadership of our yearly meetings. NAM currently has three foci: continuing workshops geared toward supporting monthly meeting/church life and vitality; supporting an annual gathering of Friends feeling called into some form of ministry, named Stoking the Fire; and creating a reprise gathering of Friends from across all our yearly meetings who do some kind of ministry with youth or young adults. NAM is in discernment about other programs, as well.

FUM is about half-way through a \$3 million capital campaign, with many Friends contributing generously. It is particularly moving to witness Friends from the poorest parts of Kenya coming forward with donations of what for them is a huge sum of money. Some of this money will go to fund the new programs such as those mentioned above.

Friends in NYYM have expressed grave concerns about the homophobic personnel policy of FUM. While the North American board is not yet at a point at which it is possible to change that policy, I can say that the tenor of the board regarding this issue has changed markedly in the past five-to-eight years. We have had many LGBT Friends serving on key committees and in leadership roles. The presence of queer Friends and queer allies is slowly changing attitudes and perceptions.

At the same time, constituent yearly meetings are wrestling strenuously over the issue of LGBT personhood and ministry. Indiana Yearly Meeting split over the issue a few years ago, and North Carolina Yearly Meeting is deeply concerned about its capacity to stay together. Many Friends are still hurting after the Indiana split, and Friends in North Carolina are in deep pain and struggle. All could use our prayers and support.

Christopher Sammond

Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) Committee

“The purpose of the Friends World Committee for Consultation is to encourage fellowship among all the branches of the Religious Society of Friends.”

A FWCC world plenary is a joyful family reunion of the Religious Society of Friends. We come together and share our different ways of worship, our leadings, our concerns, our lives, and our spirit. We deepen our own faith by coming to understand it as one bough in the branching faith of Quakerism.

What can you expect from a world-wide FWCC gathering?

Expect to be transformed. Expect to be challenged. Expect to be inspired.

Also: expect to be frustrated, dismayed, anguished, filled with joy, fulfilled with friendship, content in the gathered Spirit, questioning others, listening to others, questioning yourself, and listening to the inner light. While listening to the beliefs and values of others, expect to simultaneously question and strengthen your own beliefs. Unexpectedly, experience that of your inner God well up, flow as living water and become tears.

This year, New York Yearly Meeting sent four official representatives to the 2016 World Plenary Meeting (formerly known as the FWCC Triennial). Other NYYM members attended in the open positions. There were 320 Friends representing 77 yearly meetings from 37 countries. The spoken messages and other communication were translated into Spanish, French, and English. The site of the gathering was Pisac, Peru, in the sacred valley of the Incas high in the Andes mountains. Between the people, the place, and the Spirit that covered the gathering, we felt the transformation and awe in each of us.

Several of the NYYM representatives felt their personal leadings defined and strengthened by the experience. Two of the formal “consultations” that happened there spoke most strongly to our representatives. The Consultation on Sustaining Life on Earth was facilitated by members of the Quaker United Nations Office. One NYYM Friend wrote:

In gathering with people who shared my deepest hopes for the health of the planet, I found my calling to work for the environment strengthened. . . . An openness to the possibility of radical change inspired me to believe that we can and will take meaningful action.

We must take action that moves us out of our comfort zones. This kind of action is challenging but realigns us spiritually. The sense of doing what is right brings energy and renewal. I saw this kind of action modeled over and over again in the people who met in Peru. In sharing our visions and experiences we are made stronger and can work together across the globe to support our beautiful planet.

The minute from the consultation calls on every yearly meeting to take two concrete actions on sustainability within the next 12 months. I look forward to supporting NYYM in taking up the call.

The consultation on developing leadership and ministry focused on three areas that also correlate to the NYYM priorities:

- consideration of a World Gathering of Young Friends.
- communication among Young Friends worldwide.
- Alternatives to the Quaker Youth Pilgrimage, focused on young adults.

NYYM sent a balanced mix of experienced representatives, Friend under 35, and first time participants. We will continue to seek young adults who are interested in experiencing fellowship with other types of Quakers and offer them the opportunity to share fellowship and Spirit through the FWCC activities. We find that it deepens our own spiritual experience and awareness. Explaining our beliefs and theologies to Friends of other theological backgrounds, cultures, and languages, and the listening openly to them in return, only helps us understand ourselves better.

These thoughts are from the epistle of the 2016 World Plenary Meeting:

As Quakers our faith is inseparable from our concern to care for all life on earth. We are reminded of the Kabarak call for Peace and Eco-Justice and the need to redouble our efforts now. We call on Friends everywhere to take practical actions to sustain life on Earth. . . .

We learn from each other’s ways of connecting with God; each offering of worship held within it the opportunity for the Spirit to move and speak and sing. Sharing worship in this way enables us to recognize that we must both listen to, and speak to God.

The presence of so many young adult Friends among us has been a blessing. We heard their moving testimony and experienced their inspirational leadership. As we go back to our churches and meetings we must allow this ministry and leadership to flourish.

We are different. We came together as a diverse collection of Friends. We were challenged by our differences. This challenge is not always comfortable but it is one we welcome.

We are one. We are one in the spirit of God which does not wash away or hide our differences, but allows us to celebrate them and enables us to move beyond the spiritual boundaries that may separate us. We are able to do this by coming together in worship where, while its form may be unfamiliar, God was present throughout. Through listening deeply and tenderly to each other and to God we reached a place where we can hear and sense where the words come from even when we may not understand the tongue they are spoken in.

We are Friends. In making the choice to come together and be willing to share deeply, pray boldly, and listen lovingly together, we seek to move beyond our differences, see beyond our labels and find ways to connect with each other.

A full report from the World Plenary will be presented to the NYYM at the 2016 Summer Sessions.

The next meeting of the Friends World Committee for Consultation—Section of the Americas will be March 23-26, 2017, near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Members of the FWCC committee are available to speak to local and regional meetings about our experiences and opportunities through FWCC. The FWCC committee normally meets at Fall, Spring, and Summer Sessions. Everyone is invited.

Michael Clark, clerk

Junior Yearly Meeting Committee

The Junior Yearly Meeting (JYM) Committee continues to carry a very happy charge from the yearly meeting. Program volunteers and committee members (many of whom are also current or former volunteers) look forward to the Planning Weekend in June and Summer Sessions in July. The Committee and the Coordinators are blessed with eager, talented, and seasoned adults who work with the babies, toddlers, children, tweens, and teens who come to our yearly meeting at Silver Bay.

Through the generosity of Friends and their commitment to quality programs for our children, JYM volunteers are supported by a subsidy of their housing costs at Silver Bay. Like so many Friends, JYM struggles to be creative and responsive in light of the ever increasing costs for a week at Silver Bay. The number of volunteers has been adjusted by combining three groups into two, Junior and Senior high, and volunteers are asked to contribute more to their costs and to seek assistance from their local meetings.

At the 2015 Summer Sessions, there were 137 Friends 18 years of age and younger. JYM provided morning groups for all the school age kids and had a Friendly presence at the Silver Bay morning program that our preschoolers can attend. JYM also offered childcare in the afternoons and evenings that allowed parents to go to meetings. In all JYM programs, volunteers are

mindful of this opportunity to model Quaker values in behavior, caring for each other and resolving differences in a creative way. JYM volunteers and committee believe that Quakerism is best taught as a way of living in blessed community.

Dawn Pozzi, clerk

Oakwood Friends School

This year at Oakwood Friends School has been one of transition, reflection, and growth. The extended Oakwood community has celebrated together in times of joy and supported one another in times of sorrow. With the largest and most diverse student population in over eight years, Oakwood shares its Quaker mission with students from 13 countries and across the United States. Supporting a socio-economically diverse student body, Oakwood remains committed to a high level of financial aid. Multiple exciting projects are nearing completion, including new art and music spaces, the installation of a four-season educational greenhouse and a 2-acre ground-based solar array. Service-learning is woven into a curriculum in which students volunteer their time and energy with multiple organizations in our community. A smooth leadership transition, guided by a dedicated Board of Managers, concluded this fall as well.

In August, Peter Baily concluded his tenure as Head of School, embarking on new work in education as executive director of the Association of Independent Schools for Maryland and Washington, DC. Peter's steady hand guided Oakwood over the last fifteen years, nurturing a strong supportive community rooted in Quaker values. Last spring, the Board of Managers initiated a thoughtful transition process with the appointment of a search committee and the launch of a national search. In December, Interim Head of School Chad Cianfrani was appointed as permanent Head. In his twelfth year at Oakwood, Chad draws on his deep love for and commitment to the school community as well as his previous professional experiences in engineering, finance, and teaching.

With the school's mission and Quaker testimonies informing our curriculum, students have expanded their perspective inside and outside the classroom this year. Our student human rights interns hosted multiple conferences throughout

the year, including an event at the Eleanor Roosevelt House in December. The panel discussion brought in local experts and focused on migrant farmer rights and refugee immigration law. In April, Oakwood hosted a Native American speaker, activist, and musician, Tiokasin Ghosthorse, for a three day event celebrating Lakota culture. Working with an Oakwood student from the Rosebud Reservation in South Dakota, Tiokasin spoke to our community, held performances for the public, and built an 18' Lakota tipi with the students. Following the event, three Oakwood students from South Dakota, Rwanda, and Viet Nam had the opportunity to discuss their cultures on Tiokasin's nationally broadcast radio program, First Voices Radio.

Continuing our work within the local community, student volunteer groups spent their Sundays at multiple locations including local food pantries and The Grace Smith House, a local women's shelter. They have also begun a weekly peer tutoring program at the local public high school in Poughkeepsie. At our annual social justice lecture in May, Oakwood alumna Abigail Golden-Vazquez spoke to our students about her professional work focused on advocacy for Latino rights. Abigail's powerful words resonated with our students when she pointed to her Quaker education and Oakwood experience as defining and informing her life of social engagement, purpose, and meaning. Students and faculty also recently attended meeting for worship at Nine Partners Quarterly Meeting and participated in a program on white privilege.

Oakwood continues to thrive with the support of families who realize the value of a Quaker education and the ongoing generosity from alumni, board members, and members of New York Yearly Meeting. We have much to be thankful for this year and much to look forward to in the years ahead. We are reminded of this every morning when we begin our day together in the Meeting Room and every Wednesday when we center into silence during meeting for worship. It is in these moments, with 160 teenagers gathered, unplugged from technology and reflecting inward, that we truly see the inner light shining through our Oakwood community.

*Chad Cianfrani, Head of School,
Mary Alexander, President, Board of Managers*

Elsie K. Powell House, Inc.

The major headline this year is:

**Ann Davidson retires after 22 years
as Executive Director**

**Regina Baird Haag and Dennis Haag
are new Executive Directors**

The Saturday at Spring Sessions 2016 was declared Ann Davidson Day. A celebration of Ann's manifold contributions to Powell House and the yearly meeting was held May 7-8. Ann has been a loving and caring presence as she has shared her spiritual guidance and friendly good humor over the years. She has made Powell House a welcoming space for all of the Quaker traditions in the yearly meeting. Among her major accomplishments has been the complete renovation of the Anna Curtis Center, the assembling of a strong and spiritually grounded staff, a more stable financial condition, calm guidance through various emergencies, and the increased presence of young adult Friends at Powell House. For herself, Ann believes her major accomplishment is Powell House being a place in which Spirit is welcome. We agree.

When Ann announced her pending retirement, the Committee began a nation-wide search, interviewing candidates throughout 2015. The nationwide search found local talent. Dennis and Regina Baird Haag are New York Yearly Meeting Friends. As noted in the minutes of Spring Sessions, "Regina and Dennis have been a part of New York Yearly Meeting for over a decade during which time Regina served as the pastor of Adirondack Friends Meeting. Dennis and Regina have extensive knowledge, experiences, and relationships among the breadth of the Society of Friends including ministry, spirituality, organizational, and committee positions. Over the years they have attended conferences and meetings at Powell House and their son [Andy Haag], now a young adult, was a participant in the Youth Program. Dennis and Regina support the mission of Powell House, the New York Yearly Meeting priorities, and value the importance of continuing revelation." Regina and Dennis will commence their responsibilities in July 2016.

This was a good year for Powell House kitchens: a new

linoleum floor was laid in the Pitt Hall kitchen and the walls and ceiling painted. In the Anna Curtis Center, where the youth program resides, the kitchen was completely remodeled. It included the installation of stainless steel cabinetry and the streamlining of shelving. This remodeling has made food preparation and cleanup much easier for both youth retreats and our large multigenerational gatherings. It also makes the facility much more conducive to community group rentals.

In the Pitt Hall library the plaster ceiling was sealed and the ceiling, walls, and trim were repainted. This project entailed removing all the books and eventually returning them.

The next major project is renovating the home of the directors, Knoll House, in preparation for Regina and Dennis moving in.

Powell House continues to provide support for youth, young adults, and families through the youth program, multi-generational work weekends, and annual celebrations, and the ever popular "Creativity and Spirituality Weekend," which has expanded into both houses and several media.

The youth program directors have worked closely with the yearly meeting Youth Committee, Junior Yearly Meeting Committee, and the White Privilege Conference planning workgroup to provide training and educational opportunities to youth and youth workers.

The Executive Director has worked closely with the Spiritual Nurture Working Group and the General Secretary to provide programming that helps Friends in the yearly meeting to develop a deep spiritual understanding of the NYYM Priorities and to work to realize them. Adult programming has included programming to strengthen skills and provide respite. It allows participants to experience the various threads of Quaker practice and belief as they explore topics that include creativity, earth care, and parenting, as well as recreation, joy, and fun.

A fall-off in attendance this year has resulted in a deficit after two years of being in the black. Recognizing that the transition year will bring additional expenses, the committee is actively seeking ways to increase revenue in the upcoming year. The Personnel Committee has revised the personnel policy and looked at the compensation structure.

The committee remains grateful to Ann for her commitment to all aspects of her role as Executive Director, for her dedication to the Powell House mission, and her faithfulness to the Spirit. We look forward with eager anticipation to working with Regina and Dennis.

Darleen Farley, recording clerk

Powell House Financial Report, 2016

**Statement of Financial Position
As of March 31, 2016 and 2015**

| | March 31, 2016 (unaudited) | March 31, 2015 (audited) |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| ASSETS | | |
| Current Assets | | |
| Bank Accounts/Investments | \$ 1,003,739 | \$ 1,149,557 |
| Accounts Receivable | 413 | 688 |
| Other Current Assets | <u>(118)</u> | <u>1,557</u> |
| Total Current Assets | 1,004,034 | 1,151,802 |
| Fixed Assets | <u>1,010,320</u> | <u>925,374</u> |
| Total Assets | \$ 2,014,354 | \$ 2,077,176 |
| LIABILITIES AND EQUITY | | |
| Current Liabilities | | |
| Accounts Payable | \$ 4,878 | \$ 2,510 |
| Other Current Liabilities | <u>15,780</u> | <u>46,184</u> |
| Total Current Liabilities | 20,658 | 48,694 |
| Total Liabilities | 20,658 | 48,694 |
| Total Net Assets | 1,993,696 | 2,028,482 |
| Total Liabilities & Equity | \$ 2,014,354 | \$ 2,077,176 |

Statement of Activities
For the years ending March 31, 2016 and 2015

| | March 31, 2016 (unaudited) | March 31, 2015 (audited) |
|---|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| CASH INCOME | | |
| Contributions | \$ 49,528 | \$ 67,345 |
| Guest fees | 280,513 | 310,429 |
| Investment income | 16,226 | 17,253 |
| New York Yearly Meeting | 82,532 | 76,281 |
| Rental income | 6,600 | 7,200 |
| Other revenue | <u>1,342</u> | <u>999</u> |
| Total income | \$ 436,741 | \$ 479,507 |
| CASH EXPENSES | | |
| Administration & Office Expenses | \$ 33,011 | \$ 29,611 |
| Adult & Youth Program Direct Costs | 21,736 | 20,535 |
| Buildings & Grounds | 63,700 | 72,803 |
| Fundraising | 1,177 | 3,146 |
| Housekeeping & Food | 33,401 | 35,234 |
| Personnel | <u>313,493</u> | <u>291,745</u> |
| Total Cash Expenses | \$ 466,518 | 453,074 |
| NET CASH INCOME | (\$ 29,777) | \$ 26,433 |
| PLUS NON-CASH INCOME | | |
| Realized/Unrealized Gain on Investments | not yet calculated | \$ 68,072 |
| LESS NON-CASH EXPENSES | | |
| Depreciation | not yet calculated | \$ 35,739 |
| CHANGE IN NET ASSETS | (\$ 29,777) | \$ 58,766 |

Young Adult Concerns Committee

The Young Adult Concerns Committee (YACC) is charged with nurturing and organizing Young Adult Friends (YAFs) within New York Yearly Meeting.

In July of 2015, the Young Adult Concerns Committee facilitated gatherings at New York Yearly Meeting's Summer

Sessions. In these gatherings we explored how we, as Young Adult Friends, are being led within Quakerism and the wider world. This exploration was deepened through discussions of discernment, worship sharing, and intergenerational discussion.

The Young Adult Concerns Committee has met regularly, both electronically and in person. It was during one of these in-person meetings that the idea for the Quite-Possibly-The-First-Ever Quaker Party was formed. Every Friend, friend of Friends, long-lost Friend, relative of Friends, or friendly person wandering by who finished high school in 1990 or after...ish from New York, New England, Baltimore, and Philadelphia Yearly Meetings were invited. More than 100 Friends attended the event June 17–19. The party was co-sponsored by New York Quarterly Meeting (NYQM) and the daytime events were held at the 15th Street complex. The party included sleepovers at Brooklyn Meeting and Friends were encouraged to worship at one of the six meetings in NYQM. Other Quaker organizations participated or donated items to help facilitate the event, including FWCC, FGC, FUM, AFSC, YSOP, Friends Seminary, and QEW. Friends compiled “Quite possibly the first Epistle compiled from Social Media and written statements,” which appears below.

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 oppor-

tunities 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=cru-
cial 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

Glenn Josey, clerk

Youth Committee

No report submitted

WITNESS SECTION

Witness Coordinating Committee

As a coordinating committee, Witness Coordinating Committee's (WCC) two main functions are to season proposals brought forward by individual committees and monthly meetings, and to administer the Sharing Fund. Reports on the activities of the individual constituent committees will be made by those committees. A report for the Sharing Fund is found as the second part of this report.

The direction of WCC in this year was guided by the Statement on Leadings and Priorities; we understood our work to be "witnessing to the world" on behalf of the local meetings and individual Friends. In keeping with this direction, we allocated somewhat more of the Sharing Fund than before to the Witness Activities Fund, which awards grants to local meetings in support of their own witness activities. A detailed report of those grants is included in the Sharing Fund report below.

Four of the witness committees sponsored interest groups at Silver Bay in July. Four witness committees, along with the Task Group on Racism (which is not part of the witness section) offered financial support to enable New York Yearly Meeting to co-host the White Privilege Conference, held in April, 2016. Witness Activities Funds were made available to local meetings to support attendance at this conference and, as a result of the work by all involved, about 100 NYYM Friends attended the conference.

In July, WCC approved the financial subcommittee's recommendation to move 25% of our endowment to the Friends Fiduciary Green Fund. WCC approved the financial subcommittee's proposal that they investigate moving another 25% to a second management company that meets our qualifications for socially responsible investing, as prudent financial management calls for diversity.

We brought to the body of the yearly meeting five minutes; all were approved. One was a call for Pope Francis to repudiate the Doctrine of Discovery, and it was eventually delivered to the Holy See. (See the report of the Indian Affairs Committee.) Other approved proposals included a request to endorse

the Global Food and Water Watch; a travel minute for Robert (Sunfire) Kazmayer to attend the Parliament of the World's Religions; and a request to endorse an event called "Peace & Planet: Mobilization for a Nuclear-Free, Peaceful, Just, and Sustainable World" in New York City on April 24–26, 2015. Finally, we brought forward a minute proposed by the Prisons Committee in support of the Humane Alternatives to Long-Term Solitary Confinement Act (HALT).

Reports were given at our April Meeting on the construction of a portable mock solitary confinement cell and the White Privilege Hosting Committee. The solitary confinement cell is available to local meetings who wish to publicize the need to end this form of torture.

Sharing Fund Report for 2015

| | |
|---|-----------|
| General Sharing Fund Income Less | \$ 27,359 |
| Trustee Income (contributions) | |
| Sharing Fund Endowment Income | \$ 25,728 |
| Total Sharing Fund Income Less Trustee Income | \$53,088* |
| 2015 Sharing Fund Goal | \$ 55,000 |

* Some committees under the Sharing Fund receive funds from endowments established by the wills of now-deceased members of NYYM and its predecessors.

Sharing Fund Disbursements

| Committee | Jan. 1, 2015 | Amt disb. | 12/31/15 |
|---------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| AVP Donation | \$ 0.00 | \$ 3,518.39 | \$ 0.01 |
| Barrington Dunbar | 11,560.07 | 15,200.00 | 7,970.21 |
| Black Concerns | 4,397.83 | 5,330.93 | 3,137.92 |
| Indian Affairs | 4,308.43 | 10,750.00 | 7,573.77 |
| Peace Concerns | 7,031.70 | 1,300.00 | 5,731.70 |
| Prison Committee | 6,796.02 | 7,518.07 | 3,468.97 |
| Right Sharing | 0.00 | 3,015.77 | 0.00 |
| Witness Activities | 7,235.89 | 6,285.00 | 9,990.32 |
| World Ministries | 27,794.09 | 37,384.01 | 5,168.21 |
| Consc. Obj. to War | 4,767.76 | 949.52 | 3,817.84 |
| Working Groups | 3,991.87 | 375.00 | 4,119.00 |
| NYYM Named reps | 4,113.85 | 2,268.00 | 1,885.85 |
| Witness to the World | 0.00 | 1,860.00 | 1,155.77 |
| Total Sharing Fund | \$ 82,371.45 | \$ 96,951.93 | \$ 55,379.56 |

Witness Activities Funds grants

Witness Activities Funds grants were given to the following:

| | |
|--|---------|
| Central Finger Lakes Meeting | \$780 |
| In support of Heather Cook's attendance at a workshop offered by the Public Conversations Project on conflict transformation | |
| Chatham-Summit Meeting | \$2,400 |
| In support of their summer AVP camp | |
| Old Chatham Meeting | \$150 |
| For their ongoing film project | |
| Morningside Meeting | \$1,000 |
| For "Hope Lives for Lifers," a ministry of Morningside Meeting for long-term and life-sentenced prisoners | |
| Peconic Bay Meeting | \$1,000 |
| For the development of their scholarship fund. | |
| Regina Haag | \$125 |
| To attend the Labor and Religion Conference | |
| Purchase Quarter Prison Committee's Parolee Transition Fund * | \$500 |
| NYYM Prison Committee | \$500 |
| For work on solitary confinement * | |
| Earthcare Working Group * | \$500 |

* An earmarked donation of \$1,500 to the Sharing Fund was received from an anonymous donor who specified that it be spent on prison re-entry, solitary confinement, and climate change work. Not all of it was spent in 2015.

We have received reports from Heather Cook, Chatham-Summit, Old Chatham, Peconic Bay, Regina Haag, Morningside, and Purchase Quarter Prison Committee.

Mary Eagleson, clerk

Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP), Inc.

Alternatives to Violence Project began in Green Haven Prison in 1975, a collaborative effort between men inside and outside Friends. It continues to grow worldwide and is a life changing experience for many who become involved. AVP embodies Friends beliefs, particularly looking for that of God in everyone. AVP workshops are the initial exposure to Friends' beliefs for many. Come join us!

AVP New York's work in 2015

While the number of workshops AVP New York held in 2015 as compared with previous years contracted again in 2015, the number of participants completing the three-day workshops increased slightly. We held 155 full (18-22 hour) workshops in 2015 compared with 171 in 2014 and 196 in 2013. We grew the number of active inside facilitators: 281 incarcerated facilitators served for at least one workshop, up from 219 in 2014. Seventy-seven adult and 13 youth outside (civilian) facilitators served on-team.

The number of hours our volunteers put in is impressive. Inside facilitators volunteered more than 16,400 hours and outside facilitators more than 8,340 hours to hold more than 3,648 in-session workshop hours with 2,104 participants in full (18 hour minimum) workshops and 532 participants in mini (half-day) workshops.

Landing Strips in Brooklyn and Rochester are lively—meeting weekly and monthly respectively. Our Manhattan Landing Strip has been less attended and we have subsequently laid it down for the time being and have added one in the Bronx which meets 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 140 full workshops inside sixteen prisons including five in Spanish (Sing Sing CF and Otisville CF) with 1,936 participants. Four all-facilitator workshops focused on strengthening our facilitation skills and addressing conflict on-team. We trained 125 new apprentice facilitators inside the walls. We are up and running at our first federal prison in many years—FCI Ray Brook (in the Adirondacks)! We are pleased to have received such a warm welcome from the administration at Ray Brook and AVPers in other states report being welcomed by federal prison administrators as well. Workshops at Green Haven Prison in 2015, where AVP began, are down due to administrative issues. This temporary setback continues to be disheartening to facilitators inside and out.

The annual Forum Day was held at Woodbourne Prison this year and 15 inside facilitators joined with 13 outside facilitators from across the state. Inside facilitators planned the day—it was a day of connection and reconnection with new and old friends. A newly trained hearing-impaired facilitator tested his facilitation skills for the first time with lots of encouragement and support from his teammates!

Our Work in Communities and Schools.

Fifteen full workshops with 99 adults and 21 youth were held as well as six mini workshops with 71 adults and eight youth. Seven adult apprentice facilitators were trained, and two facilitator days were held for 27 facilitators. Workshops (including a Basic in Spanish) were held in Buffalo, Rochester, Delaware County, Albany and Westchester area (including Purchase, White Plains, Scarsdale and Yonkers).

Franklin and Delhi Schools in the Catskills held three full workshops (Basic, Advanced, Training for Facilitators) with 48 high school students and trained 13 new apprentice facilitators. Thirteen youth facilitators served on-team for these workshops. AVP was introduced to six middle and high schools in the Mount Vernon school district, reaching about 400 students. Also a mini workshop was held at a Conflict Resolution class at Fordham University.

Our Work Outside of NYS.

A number of AVP/NY facilitators attended the AVP USA Annual Gathering in Tacoma, WA, including three who were recently released from prison. New York AVPers served on-team with Nepali facilitators for workshops in Nepal through Friends Peace Teams. Nadine Hoover continued to guide the work of Friends Peace Team's Asia West Pacific Initiative and also gave two lectures on Quakers and the Peace Movement in Korea. Specialized workshops involving and mentoring opportunities occurred in several locations within Indonesia; Odessa, Ukraine; Palestine and Beit Shemesh, Israel.

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

We are so grateful to all who do this work and who make this work possible.

Jill McLellan, representative to AVPNY board

*Alternatives to Violence Project, Inc. (AVP-NY)
Financial Report, 2015*

INCOME

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Direct public support | |
| Contributions—individual | \$21,562.25 |
| Contributions—churches/meetings | 2,335.66 |
| Area Councils revenue | <u>500.00</u> |
| Total direct public support | 24,397.91 |
| Indirect public support | |
| Contributions—NYYM | |
| Sharing Fund | 3,826.33 |
| Lindley Murray | <u>1,450.00</u> |
| Total contributions—NYYM | 5,276.33 |
| Foundation/trust grants | <u>24.48</u> |
| Total indirect public support | 5,300.81 |
| Program service revenue | |
| Manual sales | 2,115.62 |
| Annual meeting fees | 2,055.00 |
| Dividends & interest-securities | <u>10,342.62</u> |
| Total program service revenue | <u>14,513.24</u> |
| TOTAL INCOME | \$ 44,211.96 |

EXPENSE

Program services

| | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|
| Certificates & TP cards | \$ 787.20 |
| Annual meeting expenses | 2,439.40 |
| Landing Strip—NYC | 574.37 |
| Landing Strip—Rochester | 218.75 |
| Landing Strip—Brooklyn | 1,602.96 |
| Newsletter | 1,255.63 |
| Scholarships | 2,324.60 |
| Volunteer expenses | 687.82 |
| Workshop expenses | 481.07 |
| Fundraising expenses | 1,689.64 |
| Promotional materials | 294.00 |
| Retreats | <u>223.68</u> |
| <i>Total program services</i> | <i>\$ 12,579.12</i> |

Management & general expenses

| | |
|--|-------------------------|
| Payroll expenses | 23,383.45 |
| Payroll service fees | 376.92 |
| Investment fees | 200.00 |
| Supplies | 381.36 |
| Telephone & telecommunications | 883.90 |
| Website | 300.00 |
| Printing & copying | 652.90 |
| Postage | 763.60 |
| Postmaster | 82.00 |
| Rent | 1,775.00 |
| Travel & meetings expenses | 109.74 |
| Insurance—Liability | 765.79 |
| Insurance—Workman's Comp | 261.00 |
| NYS Disability Insurance | 60.00 |
| Other expenses | 320.00 |
| Filing fees—NY State | <u>75.00</u> |
| <i>Total management & general expenses</i> | <i><u>30,390.66</u></i> |

TOTAL EXPENSE**\$ 42,969.78****Net ordinary income****\$ 1,242.18**

Unrealized gain/loss

- 11,616.13**Net income****\$ - 10,373.95****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 public 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 U.S. federal and state prisons. In particular, the program promotes national and international attention to the practices of isolation and torture.

The Campaign to End the New Jim Crow, led by AFSC in New York City, advocates for a paradigm shift in the use of incarceration and the continued punishment imposed by the collateral consequences of conviction and imprisonment. The campaign provides support to communities of color who are disproportionately impacted by incarceration, with a focus on parole reform and on felony disenfranchisement.

AFSC's Hope Lives for Lifers Project, also 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.

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.

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 2015 AFSC's Immigrant Rights Program expanded its legal services work to include a pilot "universal representation" program that ensures that all low-income immigrants who are detained in New Jersey and facing deportation hearings before the Elizabeth Immigration Court will receive legal representation. The new program has greatly increased AFSC's capacity to represent detained immigrants.

At the same time, AFSC continues its work in opposition to immigration detention, organizing campaigns and providing support to individuals whose lives have been impacted by the detention and deportation systems.

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 2016 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 provides opportunities for young people to engage in advocacy and organizing efforts on issues of their choosing, supports coalition work in their communities toward social justice, and relates with Quaker meetings on issues of concern.

New Programs

AFSC has hired its first Robert Andrew Stuart Fellow to help launch the Social Justice Leadership Institute in Philadelphia. The Institute will be officially launched late in 2016, while the Fellow works in collaboration with regional and national staff to build and sustain relationships with partner agencies and develop a curriculum for the Institute.

Engagement

AFSC staff members are always open to engage with local 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

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. There was originally a goal of \$50,000 per year, and it was provided that the Fund would be administered by a committee of Friends, the majority of whom would be Black. The name was changed in 1978 to recognize the work of Barrington Dunbar. The Barrington Dunbar Committee is supposed to "educate Friends on the needs of the Black and Latino sectors of the community and to stimulate Friends' concern and cooperation in responding to these needs." In 2015, as a follow-up to the adoption of NYYM's Statement of Leadings and Priorities, the Barrington Dunbar Committee sent an invitation to apply for funds to all monthly meetings in NYYM. The response was so successful that we will repeat the same process in 2016.

Helen Garay Toppins, clerk

Black Concerns Committee

To better understand the work of the Friends Committee for Black Concerns, we must first review the charge given to us by New York Yearly Meeting:

To develop among Friends a keener awareness of the violence of racism.

To stimulate involvement of Friends, as individuals and as members of meetings, in today's racial crisis.

To stimulate Friends as individuals and as members of meetings to work with all ethnic groups to overcome the handicaps of the past and to achieve political rights, educational excellence, economic opportunity and social dignity.

To increase awareness among Friends of the history and contributions of Blacks and other ethnic groups both within and outside the Religious Society of Friends.

To help to support, enhance, and deepen the multiracial character of the family of Friends.

2015 was an exciting time to be involved with the Friends Committee for Black Concerns (FCBC). The 2016 White Privilege Conference (WPC) was held nearby in Philadelphia. What

is the White Privilege Conference? WPC is a conference that examines challenging concepts of privilege and oppression and offers solutions and team-building strategies to work toward a more equitable world. The conference examined issues of privilege including: race, gender, sexuality, class, disability, etc.—the ways we all experience some form of privilege, and how we're all affected by that privilege. WPC's philosophy is one of "understanding, respecting and connecting."

The FCBC helped to ensure New York Yearly Meeting's involvement by contributing \$1,500.00 towards the \$3,000.00 required for YM sponsorship. In order to help us prepare for our role in planning the 2016 WPC, we financed travel and lodging for two NYYM Friends attending the Louisville, Kentucky 2015 WPC. Black Concerns Committee members served on both the national WPC Planning Committee and on the NYYM WPC Planning Committee. FCBC helped finance committee members' WPC registration, travel and lodging. All of our committee members (minus one who is recovering from surgery) attended the WPC in Philadelphia.

We are still in the midst of our post-WPC strategic planning. However, there are activities that we undertook in 2015 that we know we want to continue in 2016.

In 2015 we co-sponsored a public event with Fifteenth Street Meeting by covering the speaker's fees. Muriel Tillinghast, a former Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) field secretary, coordinated civil rights groups in Mississippi during Freedom Summer. In 2016 FCBC would like to co-sponsor additional public events with other meetings. Co-sponsoring public events with monthly meetings is in sync with the Statement of Leadings and Priorities "We Envision a Yearly Meeting That Supports and Amplifies Our Witness."

We will continue to provide financial support to NYYM Friends attending anti-racism training, workshops and conferences. We continue to provide financial support for disadvantaged youth of color to attend Summer Sessions and Powell House conferences. This is in keeping with our yearly meeting mandate "to enable disadvantaged youth to attend programs at yearly meeting sessions, and to attend Powell House conferences."

The National Museum of African American History and Culture will open in Washington DC, in September 2016. The Committee will need to discern if we will organize a field trip for NYYM Friends to visit the museum.

We also plan to take up the mantle of a new endeavor: The UN International Decade for People of African Descent. Andrew Tomlinson, Director of the Quaker United Nations Office, will attend our Black Concerns Committee meeting at Summer Sessions to help guide us as to best way forward. For more information visit: www.un.org/en/events/africandescentdecade.

Helen Garay Toppins, for the Committee

Bolivian Quaker Education Fund

The Bolivian Quaker Education Fund (BQEF) has now been contributing to the university-level education of young Bolivian Friends for over 14 years. The period had seen a change from a time when Quakers from the Aymara indigenous group had almost no access to education beyond the elementary level to one where the president of the country is himself Aymara and substantial work and resources have gone into making educational access at all levels around Bolivia be more accessible equitable.

For our program this has meant a number of things:

First, we have found that young Bolivian Quakers are now increasingly viewing higher-level education not as only a dream but a real achievable possibility. There still are obstacles to graduating with a professional degree, but with organizations like BQEF and the network of graduates, there is increasing help.

Second, we have found our staff plays a pivotal role in moving a process that for many is a real struggle, into a situation where students can thrive. Though a student might now be accepted to the university, many young Bolivian Quakers are from remote rural areas and have little sense of how universities work, how to choose careers, classes, and professors, how to study and have access to necessary books, electronic media, etc. They often have the real challenge of finding a room in the “big city,” traveling to class from where the affordable rooms are, having extra funds for the costs of books, lab materials, or photocopying, not to

mention food. We find our staff spends a good amount of time early on orienting new scholarship recipients and pairing them with others who have more experience.

Third, Bolivia has a great need for young professionals in every area, from medicine to tourism, agriculture to sociology. There is a real possibility that students can follow their passions and find a related job, not just think about what is most expedient and practical to support themselves and their families. BQEF contributes to both helping scholars dream and keeping them grounded in an achievable route to pursuing their interests.

These are exciting times in Bolivia. Yes, there is uncertainty as to what may happen after the current government, yet it is clear that there is no going back to former times.

In last year’s report we talked of the physical structure of the Sorata Internado or Boarding Home, which had suffered some settling and become uninhabitable. It was found that the problem was a water pipe with a massive leak that ran under various of the buildings and walls, leading to the settling. The leak was fixed as were the walls and entrance, and the program is fully functional again. The demand for this service of providing a healthy and safe place for young people from very rural villages to come and be housed while they attend high school has been increasing.

We continue to have volunteers come to Bolivia from the US and Europe and we continue to seek new ways to reinstitute the summer visitor program where we bring up young Bolivians to share with northern Friends about their lives and experience in Bolivia. The big challenge has been obtaining visas, and we hope to soon have this resolved.

We are grateful to New York Yearly Meeting for its strong support and contributions to our program.

Jens Braun, NYYM Representative to BQEF

Committee on Conscientious Objection to Paying for War

No report submitted

European American Quakers Working to End Racism Working Group

EAQWER, a small but active working group of white anti-racist Friends, spent its fifth year under the care of Witness Coordinating Committee.

At Summer Sessions in 2015 we held several activities. We again offered a Racial Listening Project, inviting Friends to tell us how they have been affected by racism. A few people took part, including one who had participated the previous year. It was a valuable opportunity for Friends to share their stories and be heard. One Friend reported it was a high point of their yearly meeting experience.

We held an interest group: After An Apology, Amends are Needed. Our focus was on addressing mass incarceration, a direct descendant of the chattel slave system in the US. Our guest Five Mualimm-Ak spoke powerfully about his personal experience with solitary confinement and subsequent activism on prison issues. He led discussion of actions Friends can take to end isolated confinement in New York State prisons, as well as to address parole abuses.

Our member Mary Pugh Clark once again presented a program to Junior Yearly Meeting. We provided a display table with books on race relations and white privilege.

Much work was done at Summer Sessions by EAQWER in partnership with other committees to carry the yearly meeting forward in participating in the annual White Privilege Conference (WPC) scheduled for April 2016. We named our member Robin Mallison Alpern to the White Privilege Task Group, newly formed under Witness Coordinating Committee. Robin, together with Charley Flint of the Task Group on Racism and Elizabeth (Buffy) Curtis of the Indian Affairs Committee, made a presentation to the yearly meeting, encouraging us to send at least 100 participants to the WPC. EAQWER co-hosted with Black Concerns Committee a supper where graduates of the WPC shared their experiences.

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. We were strongly focused on supporting the WPC.

Several of our members attended in April, and indeed NYYM sent more than 100 participants. EAQWER was able to support some participants with funds. In the process we interacted more closely with Witness Coordinating Committee, 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.

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 Prison 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.

In considering our budget request for 2016, 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.

In the upcoming year, EAQWER plans to seek ways to further the learning from the White Privilege Conference, and to support the initiative of The UN General Assembly, which proclaimed 2015-2024 as the International Decade for People of African Descent.

In closing, we would like to share the statement we drafted in April 2016 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, in which 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.

Expenditures 2015–16:

Program:

| | |
|---|--------|
| White Privilege Conference scholarships | \$ 650 |
|---|--------|

Administrative

| | |
|--------|------------|
| Travel | <u>150</u> |
|--------|------------|

| | |
|--------------|---------------|
| Total | \$ 800 |
|--------------|---------------|

Robin Alpern, for the Working Group

Friends Committee on National Legislation representatives

In November 2015, Friends from throughout the country gathered at the Quaker Public Policy Institute in Washington, DC. Interrupted by the tragic news of terrorist attacks in Paris, we shifted into silence and held the people of Paris and Beirut in the Light. Just prior to this news, more than 400 FCNL supporters lobbied the House and Senate for legislation to make permanent the funding for the Atrocities Prevention Board—a peace building initiative established with the goal to prevent deadly conflict. In just one day, FCNL delegates from yearly meetings nationwide lobbied 80 percent of the U.S. Senate offices on Capitol Hill!

More recently, the work has continued back in our home states reaching out to our US Representatives and Senators on priorities including mass incarceration, climate change, and immigration issues. FCNL’s web site provides support for all Friends and others to write letters and speak out through writing op-eds on issues of concern to Friends. Friends have discerned through gatherings at monthly meetings regarding what we are called to work on in the 115th Congress (2016-2017) and sent that discernment to the Policy Committee of FCNL. This is how FCNL’s policies are set.

For example, at Wilton Meeting we were moved to add to the priorities support for women’s reproductive rights and birth control and explicitly mention the need to eliminate the modernization of the nuclear stockpile. The policy committee reviews the discernment of monthly meetings who submit their recommendations and then presents to the annual meeting of delegates in November each year the priorities on which they have found unity.

Other long standing priorities of FCNL include promoting nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, reducing military spending, peace building and working toward prevention of violent conflict, emphasis on diplomacy over violent responses to international conflict, Native American advocacy, promoting humane immigration policies, reducing poverty, income inequality, and mass incarceration. Last but not least—reducing the influence of money in politics.

To paraphrase the Talmud, ours is not to complete the work of fixing the world but neither can we ignore the part we can play in improving it. We encourage all Friends to engage with our elected representatives as both advocates and attentive listeners. We are advised that it is especially important to speak our truth respectfully when our representatives oppose our positions.

Any NYYM Friend who would like to learn more about becoming an FCNL delegate can call me for more information. Also, Friends who are not members of the general committee can still attend the annual Quaker Public Policy Institute in Washington DC in November each year. FCNL also has internships for young Friends and fellowships for older Friends who can make a longer-term sustained commitment to lobby on behalf of Friends concerns on Capitol Hill.

Diane Keefe, clerk, FCNL delegates

Friends Peace Teams representatives

Friends Peace Teams (FPT) continues its extraordinary grass roots peace work in countries around the world that are dealing with civil wars and other violence on a daily basis. Using the leadership skills of its many volunteers in coordination with local leaders, FPT offers dozens of workshops every month: AVP (Alternatives to Violence Project), trauma resiliency, HROC (Healing and Rebuilding Our Communities), and other peace-building programs. Since its beginning 22 years ago, your generous support of FPT makes this possible. Thank you.

The African Great Lakes Initiative (AGLI) conducted two successful Healing and Restoring our Community international trainings in Rwanda and introduced HROC to the Kakuma Refugee Camp in northwestern Kenya. In Burundi AGLI addressed the conflict surrounding the election for a third term of the current president by conducting citizen reporting, peace and democracy groups, and peace dialogues. On Mt. Elgon a peace team has made contacts with the former Land Sabot Defense Force rebels and worked on reintegrating them into the community they damaged. In Rwanda the Children Peace Libraries continued with training in peer mediation for the

librarians at the Peace Libraries. The Kamenge Clinic in Burundi has provided expanded services to the community, such as programs with rape survivors, seminars on family planning, particularly with individuals who are HIV positive.

Peace-building en las Américas continued an extensive program of Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) workshops in Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, and Colombia. In Colombia, the program in the Central Region (Bogotá) began to develop programs in poor communities of displaced people in conjunction with municipal authorities. A group of Franciscan Sisters working throughout the country have joined in presenting AVP workshops in a variety of communities. In Honduras, one group is working with poor communities in San Pedro Sula and el Progreso, a prison, and with youth at risk in a local middle school. Another Honduran group has trained seven inmate facilitators and worked with local teachers. In El Salvador, our partners have worked with several groups of at-risk youth. In Guatemala, in partnership with the American Friends Service Committee, a program with staff of a girls' juvenile detention center was initiated and the Peace School program at an alternative middle school in Chimaltenango was expanded to include weekly peace activities in addition to the regular AVP workshops. Both El Salvador and Guatemala AVP groups participated in a successful pilot program with a large international child sponsorship program. We hope that AVP can be used throughout this program and its 65 additional countries. Our founding Coordinator, Val Liveoak, stepped down at the end of 2015 and we are excited to announce that we have hired Monica Maher who will begin serving as PLA Coordinator in October, 2016.

When the massive earthquake struck Nepal in April of 2015, Asia West Pacific volunteers were leading AVP workshops. We immediately started work with our local contacts to identify needs for relief that were ignored by other organizations, and raised and distributed \$50,562 for relief.

Other accomplishments include the following:

- a translation of Quaker and AVP materials into Indonesian; the film Silaturahmi (the Power of Visiting) was released and made available for group showing;

- a new program of local support for Bhutanese refugees who have relocated to the United States;
- co-hosting advanced AVP workshops with AVP Korea;
- publication of *The Power of Goodness*, a book of world-wide peace stories illustrated by the children of Chechnya during the Russian invasion of 1995;
- our third annual international training for peace was held in Indonesia with participants from five countries across the region;
- continuing support for the people of Baruk Induk, Indonesia, who are being displaced from land they have worked for fifteen years;
- translation of the *AVP Basic Manual* into the local language of the Philippines, Visayas;
- maintained partnerships with other organizations in the development and production of water filters in Indonesia; and
- partnered in a series of trauma resiliency and basic AVP workshops in Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza.

We are grateful for your financial and spiritual support for all those working for peace as volunteers of Friends Peace Teams.

Shirley Way, representative

Friends Peace Teams Financial Report, 2015

**Statement of Activities
Year Ending October 31, 2015**

| | Unrestricted | Temporarily Restricted | Total |
|--|---------------------|-------------------------------|----------------|
| Support | | | |
| African Great Lakes Initiative | \$ 258,033 | 32,574 | 290,607 |
| Asia West Pacific Initiative | 74,786 | 4,950 | 79,736 |
| Peacebuilding en las Americas Initiative | 22,757 | 12,363 | 35,120 |
| Net assets released from restrictions (Note E) | 52,010 | (52,010) | — |
| <i>Total Support</i> | <i>407,586</i> | <i>(2,123)</i> | <i>405,463</i> |
| | Unrestricted | Temporarily Restricted | Total |
| Revenues and Gains | | | |
| Investment Income | 96 | — | 96 |
| Contributions | 16,748 | — | 16,748 |
| Meeting Income | 13,409 | — | 13,409 |
| Peace Quest | — | — | — |
| <i>Total Revenues and Gains</i> | <i>30,253</i> | <i>—</i> | <i>30,253</i> |
| Total Support, Revenues and Gains | 437,839 | (2,123) | 435,716 |
| Expenses | | | |
| Program Services | | | |
| African Great Lakes Initiative | 277,261 | — | 277,261 |
| Asia West Pacific Initiative | 74,297 | — | 74,297 |
| Peacebuilding en las Americas Initiative | 19,198 | — | 19,198 |
| <i>Total Program Services</i> | <i>370,756</i> | <i>—</i> | <i>370,756</i> |
| Supporting Activities | | | |
| Management and General | 36,400 | — | 36,400 |
| Fundraising | 4,411 | — | 4,411 |
| <i>Total Supporting Activities</i> | <i>40,811</i> | <i>—</i> | <i>40,811</i> |
| Total Expenses | 411,567 | — | 411,567 |
| Changes in Net Assets | 26,272 | (2,123) | 24,149 |
| Net Assets, Beginning of Year | 15,006 | 58,522 | 73,528 |
| Net Assets, End of Year | 41,278 | 56,399 | 97,677 |

Indian Affairs Committee

From the first arrival of Quakers on this continent, there have been Friends who carried a concern for the Native people living here. This committee, convened in 1798 with the same concern, is the longest-standing committee of our yearly meeting. We therefore stand on the shoulders of a long line of Friends.

At the same time, it has been and remains necessary from time to time that we renew the vision we carry of our committee's mission. Our last clerk, Susan Wolf, undertook such a re-visioning during her years of service ending in 2015, sustaining and renewing the committee not only among Friends but in Native communities across the breadth of our yearly meeting, where it is said that "her name is synonymous with Quakers."

In 2012, our yearly meeting repudiated the Doctrine of Discovery, proclaimed in Papal Bulls of the 15th and 16th Centuries to justify the theft of Native lands. At Summer Session 2015, our committee broadened this witness, with a letter to Pope Francis calling on the Catholic Church to repudiate this policy, which they first enunciated. After careful consideration, Friends approved a final version of the letter. In the Fall Emily Boardman (current Indian Affairs Committee clerk) joined the Native Gathering in Philadelphia where momentum built in hope of a meeting with the Pope that never materialized. We did ultimately receive on behalf of the Pope a rather equivocal response to our letter (now posted on the yearly meeting website). We find ourselves a part of a giant groundswell of Native peoples and allies across the world who oppose this pernicious Doctrine, engrafted onto American law as the basis for four centuries of federal and state policies of land seizures and genocide, policies that remain in effect and still control U.S. law and relationships with Native peoples and Nations today.

Onondaga Clan Mother Freida Jacques, as keynote speaker for 2013 Summer Sessions, shared traditional wisdom of the "Good Mind" and the story of the Great Law of Peace brought by the Peacemaker, and the Tree of Peace which he planted. This teaching made abundantly clear how much Friends share with Native Peoples. Many Friends also joined in the powerful witness of the Two Row Wampum Renewal Campaign's Journey Down the Hudson both as paddlers and supporters,

which followed immediately after our Summer Sessions.

In May of 2015, our committee gathered at Kanatsiohare:ke (traditional Mohawk retreat center) near Fonda, New York. The gathering was hosted and joined by Haudenosaunee Elders Freida Jacques, Kay Olan, and Tom and Alice Porter. Together we celebrated Susan Wolf's years of service as we shared a conversation of deep wisdom and a mutual willingness to continue in the spirit of the Two Row, paddling side by side down the River of Life with deep respect for the Earth and one another.

In other actions since last Summer Sessions, the Committee brought forward and NYYM endorsed the petition for clemency for Leonard Peltier. Several members of our Committee participated in the White Privilege Conference and three of us served on the yearly meeting committee for that conference. In October several of us joined with Tom Porter, Freida Jacques, Kay Olan, and Evan Prichard at an Indigenous Peoples Day event organized by committee member Tom Rothschild and co-sponsored by Brooklyn Friends School and Brooklyn Meeting. Tom Rothschild also attended an event at Oakwood Friends School this spring with Lakota Elder Tiokasin Ghosthorse to bring their teachings to the school and supported two Lakota students currently attending there.

We are now looking at ways to include Native elders in a more formal role of bringing guidance to our committee as we seek to be strong allies. We are supporting both financially and with the enthusiastic work of time and people the forthcoming "Two Row" on the Grand River in Canada (where we are cooperating with Friends from Canadian Yearly Meeting), as well as the global voyage of the traditional Hawai'iian sailing vessel Hokule'a landing in New York City June 5th. We support the effort of Tom Porter to bring about greater distribution of his book of traditional wisdom, *And Grandma Said*. *

We also continue our tradition of financial support for Native organizations and Native students, including the Blossom Garden School, the Akwesasne Freedom School, the Ndinakina Center's programs in Abenaki language, and the Marjorie Sexton Memorial Scholarship. The money comes from The Sharing Fund, Lindley Murray Fund, and other trust funds of

the yearly meeting that include this work among their purposes.

We recognize the “Original Instruction” remembered by Indigenous Peoples, and if they are ready and willing to share that wisdom, it is imperative that we learn what we can so that, together, we might re-member the sacred place of our being. In all of this, we see the possibilities of mutual efforts in any number of exciting and spirit-led ways. In this Spirit and toward that end we move forward with the hope that we:

- recognize that we ALL ‘Stand On Sacred Ground’,
- have a responsibility to learn all we can about what that means, and
- bring it into our practice

Emily B Boardman, clerk and Committee Support

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) mobilizes people of faith to end torture in U.S. policy, practice, and culture.

NRCAT clearly frames torture as a moral issue and their work includes the following priorities:

To end the use of torture in U.S. prisons and detention facilities, in particular the use of prolonged solitary confinement.

NRCAT is working for an end to the torture of prolonged isolation through supporting alternatives that prioritize restorative justice, therapeutic interventions, and racial justice.

In New York State, NRCAT is actively campaigning to pass the HALT Bill (Humane Alternatives to Long Term Isolation) and in New Jersey to pass the Isolated Confinement Restriction Act. Local meetings are encouraged to organize events to raise awareness about this issue and to mobilize support for the legislation in their state. New York Yearly Meeting has a replica solitary confinement cell available for events.

To ensure that U.S.-sponsored torture of detainees never happens again.

Guantanamo Bay continues to stand as a symbol of our nation’s use of torture. NRCAT actively campaigns for the closing of the detention facility at Guantanamo as one of the steps needed to end U.S.-sponsored torture forever.

For information and support on how to utilize the resources of NRCAT, contact your NYYM representatives—Judy Meikle and Paul Rehm.

Judy Meikle and Paul Rehm, representatives

New Jersey Council of Churches

No report submitted

New York State Council of Churches

No report submitted.

Prisons Committee

The work of the Prisons Committee is grounded in our faith that there is that of God in each person, which certainly includes men and women who are incarcerated. The opportunity to worship inside the walls can be a deeply spiritual experience for everyone involved. Silence and a feeling of safety are uncommon in prison settings but almost every State of the Meeting report from a prison group mentions how important these are.

Support of the Prison Worship Groups and those who attend them is a major focus for the committee. We continue to supply worship groups with copies of Faith & Practice and other materials as well as funding refreshments. Several of the Worship Groups have held Days of Reflection, retreats or quarterly meetings this year, when they have had the opportunity to reflect on a chosen spiritual topic. Those at Green Haven are continuing to be frustrated in their attempt to reinstate the quarterly meetings they had in the recent past. The attendees at our worship groups are invited to the Protestant Family Event, which works well for some facilities, particularly when the outside volunteers are also invited to attend.

This year we had one new worship group begin at Orleans Correctional Facility with five men who used to worship in Auburn and Attica. This group is now able to meet twice a month, up from the original allowance of one time per month. Attendance at many other worship groups is down, largely due to many transfers to other correctional facilities and some releases, mostly from medium facilities. A letter was written to the Department of Corrections and Community Supervision at Summer Sessions followed by a meeting in Albany May 11, 2015. The results were less positive than hoped for, and another meeting was suggested for 2016.

Men in prison are often isolated, receiving no visits or letters for years at a time. Some of the money in our budget goes for Christmas and birthday cards and motto calendars. These are sent both to men in the Prison Worship Groups and to anyone who has formerly been part of one. Men are often transferred to facilities that do not have Quaker worship. In a number of cases the cards and calendars may be the only mail someone who is incarcerated receives.

Another focus is witness regarding issues of criminal justice. Many members of New York Yearly Meeting have been involved in prison work of various kinds and are aware of the problems associated with incarceration and re-entry. For that reason we have contributed to organizations that work on these issues or assist the formerly incarcerated with re-entry. These include Redemption Center, Breathing Space, Purchase Quarter Parolee Transition Fund, and funds for a projector to be used in solitary confinement presentations. At NYYM Summer Sessions 2015, Prisons Committee had a replica solitary cell, provided information about the effects of solitary confinement, and had materials for Friends to write to legislators regarding this issue. Five Mualimm-ak from the Incarcerated Nation Corporation spoke movingly at Sessions regarding his time in solitary. We also supported the White Privilege Conference, including sending our representative to the conference.

This past year Bill Sims passed away on June 26, 2015 while incarcerated at Walsh Medical. He served 43 years in prison and was instrumental in starting the first prison worship group in New York and was a member of Poplar Ridge Meeting. His

memorial service at Poplar Ridge was very moving, and his memorial minute was widely distributed. Also, writings by members of the Sing Sing Prison Worship Group were featured in Friends Journal, December 2015.

The Prisons Committee meets at all sessions of the yearly meeting and maintains an email distribution list that includes about 80 people interested in prison issues. Friends are invited to join in this witness. One may apply to become a regular prison volunteer or do paperwork for a one-time visit. ARCH programs have been presented in prisons, and ARCH visitors may be visiting some who are incarcerated. Friends are invited to visit or write someone feeling isolated in a facility where there is no worship group. Great opportunities for spiritual growth are found inside the walls. Contact anyone on the Prisons Committee for more information.

Jill McLellan, clerk

Right Sharing of World Resources

During the calendar year 2015, New York Yearly Meeting contributed \$3015.77 to Right Sharing of World Resources, Inc. from the Sharing Fund. In addition, we contributed \$2,000 from other income to cover the administrative costs of making possible eight grants in Sierra Leone instead of the 2 or 3 normally provided in that country. Individual Friends and local meetings also contributed to RSWR, but the amounts are not available to me.

About 80% of the regular contribution was spent on program costs, including grants to partnering non-governmental organizations in three countries: Kenya, Sierra Leone, and India. Other program costs include one contractor in each country who is responsible for visiting prospective projects to determine whether they are viable, and for offering training to the leaders in how to run a successful project. The major focus of every project is income generation for poor women, who are organized into self-help groups, but many include training for the women in how to run a business, keep accounts, and sometimes, the skills needed for whatever business they choose to start.

A recent study has shown that while microcredit programs

may not always succeed in improving the quality of life for the recipients, micro-savings programs are always helpful. In the past, RSWR did not require that the business plans of the projects include mandatory savings, but since board members learned of this study, they have made this a requirement.

In 2015, RSWR funded 14 projects in Sierra Leone, 9 in Kenya and 15 in India. With an average of 20 women per project, this means that, initially, about 760 women received loans to start businesses. Since they pay back their loans, usually within one year, many more women have since been given a boost onto the road out of poverty.

In April, 2016, Purchase Quarterly Meeting hosted the board at its semiannual two-day meeting. Local Friends offered overnight hospitality and food to board members, and Purchase Meeting provided a comfortable venue for the actual meeting. From the board meeting minutes:

The Board and Management of Right Sharing of World Resources minute our deep appreciation to Purchase Friends Meeting and Purchase Quarterly Meeting for their many members' generous hosting of our annual meeting. Your hospitality and support have been so welcoming, your provision of lodging and companionship so generous, and your meals and snacks incredibly nourishing in body and Spirit. Thank you so very much for all these gifts.

Mary Eagleson, RSWR resource person

William Penn House

No report submitted

Committee on World Ministries

The World Ministries Committee (WMC) 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.

This past year WMC has set up an annual scholarship fund in the name of Newton Garver covering the tuition for students at BQEF in Bolivia. We have continued giving annually to Schenectady Meeting's Famine Relief in Zimbabwe. New this year was a project sponsored by John Bailey of Hamilton

Meeting for Friendly Water for the World, a Quaker organization which provides training in construction and maintenance of these ingenious BioSand filter systems in Ghana. And Belize City is getting a self-sustaining AVP program set up by FUM. It has been an exciting year for projects.

Because the adjustment of funding from the Trustees this year will reduce future WMC funding, World Ministries Committee will need to rethink which of its projects to support, since other committees now receive some of what had been WMC funding and thus are in a better position to support these projects.

The grants were approved by Arlene Reduto, Ed Doty, Martha Gurvich, Diane Keefe, Paul Rehm, Miriam McGiver and Gloria Thompson.

Arlene Reduto, clerk

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 this year on a trial basis, the clerks of the Meetings for Discernment Steering Committee and of Trustees. 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.

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, or that encompass the responsibilities of more than one committee.

Last summer, the Liaison Committee established under its care the Leadings and Priorities Support Working Group, charged with maintaining the connections between the life of our monthly meetings and work that occurs at the level of yearly meeting committees. The group met several times and refined its purpose and processes. The Liaison Committee approved a revised name and charge of the group, at the request of the Working Group.

Leadings & Priorities Support Working Group

(revised 6/12/2016)

During Summer Sessions 2014, New York Yearly Meeting united on a set of Leadings & Priorities to guide yearly meeting activities and budget decisions through the next five to eight years. In approving these priorities, we made a commitment "to focus the energy and resources of our Yearly Meeting . . . on achieving a

vision of growing and vital monthly meetings that are open and loving communities, effective in their outreach, active in the world, and skillful in nurturing the spiritual lives of Friends of all ages." We also agreed to utilize our priorities "in preparing budgets, staff work plans, and other services and initiatives of the Yearly Meeting and its committees and constituent parts." And we agreed to pursue "a yearly meeting structure that is accountable to these priorities, transparent in its finances and integrally connected to the monthly meetings it represents and supports." The yearly meeting needs a body to listen for and attend to whether or how much the yearly meeting structure is indeed following our priorities, if this focus proves fruitful, and to report regularly to the yearly meeting.

The working group will attend to how the yearly meeting as a whole is living into these priorities and consult with monthly and regional meetings, as appropriate, to discern with Friends how the meetings are being affected by the yearly meeting organizational structure's focus on these priorities. This attention shall weigh both the use of money under the care of the yearly meeting and the use of Friends' time and energy by yearly meeting staff and volunteers. If the working group finds that the focus on our priorities is not proving fruitful, that the priorities are not being utilized, or that they are not having significant impact, in consultation with monthly meetings it will advise ways that the yearly meeting structure and the committees, staff, and volunteers through which it functions might better support this work. The working group will be under the care of Liaison Committee.

The headings for the priorities are as follows:

- We envision a yearly meeting deeply grounded in the practice of our faith.
- We envision a yearly meeting made up of strong, vital monthly meetings.
- We envision a yearly meeting gathered together into one body.
- We envision a yearly meeting that nurtures our children, youth, and young adults.
- We envision a yearly meeting that supports and amplifies our witness.

- We envision a yearly meeting that is accountable and transparent.

The composition of the working group will include as many committed Friends as may be available from among the following:

- NYYM assistant clerk.
- Representative from Ministry section.
- Representative from Meetings for Discernment.
- Representative from JYM or Youth Committee and Young Adult Concerns.
- Representative from Powell House (separated out from the JYM/Youth line because Powell House hears the hunger for workshops on particular topics for all ages, not just youth, and addresses it in how and what it schedules for us).
- Representative from Witness section.
- Representative from General Services section.
- Representative from ARCH or Aging Concerns Committee.
- The clerk/convener will seek representation from each regional meeting, including, as available, two representatives from different areas within our geographically largest, Farmington-Scipio Regional Meeting.
- General Secretary, ex-officio.
- The immediate past clerk of NYYM will be available for consultation as the group feels the need for input from that source.

The Assistant Clerk of NYYM will be convener for the group, and may be asked to serve as clerk. The working group will seek as wide a geographic distribution of members as possible.

Functions and Activities of the Working Group

The working group will communicate with, visit, and obtain information from all parts of the yearly meeting in order to discern our faithfulness in focusing on our priorities, which may include

- i. reviewing the budgets and spending decisions of all parts of the Yearly Meeting structure and yearly meeting staff work plans;

- ii. requesting information and materials from the yearly meeting clerk, general secretary, Financial Services Committee, the coordinating committees, and other committees and groups within the yearly meeting;
- iii. considering the yearly meeting's allocation of volunteer resources and support for volunteer activities;
- iv. visiting and communicating with regional and monthly meetings to learn how the meetings are being affected by the priorities and how the yearly meeting can better live into its commitment to "achieving a vision of growing and vital monthly meetings;" and
- v. participating in Budget Saturday (or any successor activity).

Working group members will review all of the State of the Meeting reports each year as one tool in this work.

The working group will report in writing to the yearly meeting at least once a year at Summer Sessions, and will provide its reports to all monthly and regional meeting clerks.

Lucinda Antrim, clerk of New York Yearly Meeting